

Temple Mount:
the real
story

Page 12

IN THESE TIMES

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\$1.25

FINALLY,

something

to

cheer

about.

Page 7

Greg Helgeson/Twin City Reader

Paul Wellstone, Minnesota's U.S. senator-elect

Bernie Sanders, Vermont's U.S. representative-elect

Rob Swanson



Daily News strikers rally in New York City.

Unions and the News

By Suzy I. Parker

NEW YORK

In what labor leaders see as a seminal struggle for their movement, round two of the strike at the *New York Daily News* appears to belong to the unions.

Since the newspaper last month forced nine of its 10 unions into calling a strike knowingly coveted by management, just over one-tenth of the *News*' usual 1.1 million copies are reaching readers and advertisers are pulling out. But the end of the battle may bring only a victory of principle to whichever side wins. The 71-year-old paper itself may well fall by the wayside, killed in a war over whether the collective-bargaining process will continue to exist in the heavily unionized workplaces of New York and in news establishments throughout the country.

In the making for more than a year, the strike at the nation's third-largest daily began shortly after 2 a.m. October 25 when a company supervisor at the *News*' Brooklyn printing plant ordered a driver on light duty to stand up. The worker, sporting a bad knee and a

report from management that he be allowed to sit, refused. He was fired, and a union representative backing him up was escorted out of the building. Some 20 to 30 drivers who either followed or were already outside with their trucks were refused readmittance, as were the rest of the 200 workers who were ordered away from their work stations, first to the other end of the building and then outside.

Within 20 minutes, a bus bearing Pennsylvania tags and filled with replacement workers pulled into the crowd. Violence ensued—two delivery trucks were fire-bombed, windshields smashed and tires and radiators punctured. The company announced that a strike had begun; the unions charged a lockout. Drivers stayed on the job at the paper's two other plants, and the morning shifts showed up to work as usual. "They [management] had to have the crisis," said Michael Alvino, president of the 700-member drivers' union. "They had to make the situation."

At 9 p.m., the first shift of drivers reported for work, buttressed by hundreds of co-workers, labor supporters and reporters. Apprised by management that the 60 most junior workers had been permanently replaced, Alvino declared an unfair-labor-practices strike and was immediately joined by seven other craft unions. By late the next afternoon, the vascillating Newspaper Guild, representing 750 reporters and other white-collar staff, also went out. Only the printers remained, having accepted no-strike, lifetime job guarantees in 1974.

The concession stand: At first take, the strike appears a failure of union strategy to withstand what workers say has been an escalating campaign to scare them off their jobs and bust their unions. Management began more than a year ago to hire and train replacements, including employees from other Tribune Company-owned newspapers in Chicago and Florida, and it had told driver and pressman supervisors to either give up their union cards or be demoted. While the pressmen immediately grieved to the directive—which had kept union men in supervisory positions for the time being—the drivers did not. As a result, they were supervised by management representatives such as the one who ordered the driver to stand up.

But while such management moves greatly increased tensions at the printing plant, the unions strove not to strike, believing their only chance was to continue to work and to hope for a settlement at the bargaining table.

But bargaining, which began in January, has been, for the most part, fruitless. The company remains committed to its demand for a management's-rights clause that would give it sole discretion over staffing, hours and other work rules affecting the paper's 2,500-plus union employees. Unless management gains full control, the Tribune Company says, it will no longer subsidize the estimated \$500 million investment in color printing plants that virtually all agree is necessary for the paper's survival.

The unions, for their part, concede major changes are necessary. But they insist decisions be made across the table and vow never to give up their right to bargain. Shortly before the strike began, New York City Labor Commissioner Eric Schmertz declared that the *News* was demanding a contract that accords management the unilateral right to make changes without further negotiations with the unions. "If the *News* prevails on that theory, then the industry would be radically changed," Schmertz said.

Knowing management could institute whatever work rules it wanted should they go out and that, since Reagan broke the 1981 air traffic controllers' strike, permanent replacements could take their jobs away forever, the unions stayed on the job. They continued to work despite the arrival, soon after their contracts expired on March 31, of armed security guards, attack dogs and barbed wire around printing plant fences, as well as an escalating number of suspensions and firings for work-rule infractions—moves company spokesman John Sloan said in early October were made "more to prevent a strike than to create one."

But the October 25 incident, staged as it may have been, finally forced the issue. "We have no alternatives," said George McDonald, head of the Allied Printing

Trades Council, the umbrella group for the 10 unions. "When they announce permanent replacements, that's a declaration of war. Permanent replacements means there's no way you can settle this labor dispute."

During a November 1 unity rally, columnist Juan Gonzalez told 13,000 union members that his guild colleagues who have crossed the picket line to return to a newsroom most staffers loved are wrong to hold themselves apart from their blue-collar co-workers and to blame the drivers' union for breaking strategy. "Those cowards who went in there don't understand that there's only a certain amount of indignity that a human being can take," Gonzalez said.

Daily scabloid: By the second week, an estimated 100 to 150 guild members had crossed the line, half of them photographers and reporters, mostly sports and feature writers. But the majority stayed out—including the big-name writers—in a show of unity that appears to have caught management by surprise. Meanwhile, replacement reporters have been thrown out of news conferences called by municipal unions, whose own threats to strike are New York's No. 1 story right now. Government officials and other politicians also have refused to talk to *News* reporters, fearing political fallout from the one out of three area workers who belong to unions.

The result is a paper of questionable editorial quality. The real boost for the unions' side has been their ability to keep the paper from the newsstands. While union leaders publicly deplore the use of violence, their members have ransacked delivery trucks and, in some cases, followed through on threats of reprisal against newsstand vendors.

INSIDE STORY

The violence began to abate in the second week of the strike, the peak of effectiveness and public tolerance having been reached, as one striker put it. "The bad cop's already come through," he said. "Now we can be the good cop, telling the vendors, 'We know you want to support us.' The point's been made [through] psychological intimidation." A *News* reward of up to \$5,000 for information on the "urban terrorists" vandalizing and threatening news vendors also has helped curb the violence, along with publisher James Hoge's refusal to agree to a mediator until the violence ceased.

The damage done: But the damage has been done. According to union figures, only 40 of the paper's 600 advertisers were still running ads as of November 6, and management admitted it was resorting to giving the paper away free on city streets in order to keep circulation figures up.

While the unions have done well with their month-long campaign of soliciting advertisers' support and, recently, of leafletting big retailers who continue to advertise, they are facing problems with the minority community.

Blacks and Hispanics make up the core of the *News*' readership, and, along with women, are the beneficiaries of 80 percent of the replacement jobs. In an open letter to Jesse Jackson, before a rally to show minority support for the strikers, publisher Hoge said he found it inconceivable that Jackson "would choose to endorse or align himself with six lily-white craft unions." The unions dispute Hoge's assertion, with the guild and the drivers' union stating that nearly a third of their members are minorities. David Hardy, one of four black reporters who won an equal employment opportunity suit against the *News* in 1987, noted at a November 6 press conference that there are no blacks or Hispanics among *News* senior management.

While Hoge and the unions battle it out for the hearts and minds of New Yorkers, the future of the city's favorite newspaper is up for grabs. Management asserts it can publish for at least another year, while some union leaders predict the paper will be out of business by Christmas.

Suzy I. Parker is a freelance writer based in New York.

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| Inside Story: New York's bad News | 2 |
| Wanted: A Democratic strategy for the '90s | 3 |
| The First Stone/In Person | 4 |
| In Short | 6 |
| All's Wellstone in Minnesota | 7 |
| Bernie Sanders: In the pink, in the House | 7 |
| Texas surprise: Richards in, Hightower out | 8 |
| Disappointment in California | 9 |
| Populist politicking, Midwestern style | 10 |
| Come Helms and high water, again | 11 |
| Sects, lies and videotape at Temple Mount | 12 |
| Editorial | 14 |
| Letters/Sylvia | 15 |
| Viewpoint: Gutting standards, losing lives in the workplace | 16 |
| Ashes & Diamonds by Alexander Cockburn | 17 |
| In Print: Number-crunching the middle class | 18 |
| Camera's role in seeing the "other" | 19 |
| In the Arts: Korea, a divided nation on film | 20 |
| Film forecast from the north | 21 |
| Classifieds | 23 |
| Founding Fathers choose guns over butter | 24 |

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ELECTION '90



By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

THE DAY AFTER THE NOVEMBER 6 ELECTIONS, Republican strategists, who two months ago were promising a Republican realignment in the '90s, were putting the best face on the party's showing. After all, it had lost only one seat in the Senate, 10 in the House and had split the governor's races. But with one exception—the California governor's race—the Republicans lost everywhere it really counted.

Voters rebuked the party's most promising moderates and conservatives—from Illinois Rep. Lynn Martin to New Hampshire Rep. Chuck Douglas, the chairman of the Conservative Opportunity Society. The party lost key gubernatorial races in Florida and Texas and showed signs of losing its hold in the plains states. As the party heads into '92, it is now deeply divided over taxes and abortion.

Yet after last week's elections, the Democrats don't have many grounds for optimism. Although they have probably nailed down control of the House of Representatives for the '90s, they still show little sign of being able to field a national candidate and platform. Their victories this year, like those in 1982 and 1986, may merely presage a Republican presidential landslide two years hence. If the 1990 elections confirmed anything, it is that division and stalemate will continue to plague the federal government.

The elections also showed how much American politics suffers from arrested development. While the U.S. and the world have changed radically over the past decade, the 1990 elections represent a late phase of the election cycle that began in 1978, when Republican conservatives scored upsets in Congress by campaigning against abortion, busing, the Panama Canal treaty and taxes. This year, the domestic issues were virtually the same. The big difference was that it was

the Democrats rather than the Republicans who used two of these issues to their advantage.

The tax revolt: In California in 1978, Howard Jarvis led a campaign to cut property taxes, and in Congress that same year, Rep. Jack Kemp (R-NY) and Sen. William Roth (R-DE) began to win support for a plan to reduce federal tax rates. The revolt goes on, although it is now based more on preventing tax increases than cutting taxes.

In Kansas, State Treasurer Joan Finney, a pro-life Democrat, defeated incumbent Gov. Mike Hayden by focusing on a Hayden tax increase. In New Jersey, citizen anger at Democratic Gov. Jim Florio's progressive tax increase almost led to the defeat of Democratic Sen. Bill Bradley, whose little-known and poorly financed opponent told voters to send Florio a message by voting against Bradley.

This anti-tax sentiment should not be confused with "soak-the-rich populism." Voters in New Jersey were not impressed that Florio's taxes primarily hit the rich. If anything, the public's mood on taxes is reactionary, opposed to any tax increase. This makes it difficult to win support for or even discuss new initiatives in education, infrastructure and health care.

On the national level, Democrats such as Iowa Sen. Tom Harkin were able to use the tax issue to pillory the Republicans as the party of the rich, but this was because President George Bush initiated a tax increase and then resisted applying it to millionaires. In defense, one Republican, Kentucky incumbent Sen. Mitch McConnell, even began running ads saying that he favored taxing millionaires. In the next two years, more Republicans are likely to follow McConnell's than

Bush's example, making it more difficult for Democrats to exploit the tax issue in this way.

The politics of abortion: In Iowa's 1978 Senate contest, conservative Republican Roger Jepsen defeated incumbent Democrat Dick Clark, largely due to defections from pro-life Catholic Democrats in Eastern Iowa. In 1990, abortion remained important, but in the wake of the backlash against the Supreme Court's *Webster* decision, it worked

The elections show how much American politics suffers from arrested development.

for pro-choice Democrats rather than pro-life Republicans.

Pro-life Republicans lost the moderate Republican and the independent vote. In Iowa's Senate race, in Florida's gubernatorial contest between former Sen. Lawton Chiles and Republican Gov. Bob Martinez, and in a Virginia congressional race between incumbent Republican Stan Parris and Democratic challenger James P. Moran, the Republican's opposition to abortion helped provide the Democrats with the margin of victory.

Some conservatives claimed that the victories of pro-life Democrats such as Finney and Pennsylvania Gov. Bob Casey proved that the issue still cuts both ways. But these two wins highlighted how dangerous the issue has become for Republicans. While pro-life Democrats can still hold their constituent base, pro-life Republicans cannot.

Conservatives and race: In 1978, North

Carolina Republican Sen. Jesse Helms railed against "forced busing" in his campaign against Democrat John Ingram. In 1990, Helms, Alabama Gov. Guy Hunt and a few other Republicans once more played the racial card. Unfortunately, it worked again.

But as the South becomes more suburban and high-tech and as more Northern emigres disrupt its Confederate ethos, Helms' style of racist politics is likely to prove less successful. This year, Helms' opponent, black Democrat Harvey Gantt, picked up the same kind of young, white-collar voter who last year supported Gov. Doug Wilder in Virginia—a state that has already fully made the transition from the Old to the New South.

Yet race is likely to remain an issue as long as the lives and fortunes of many whites and blacks sharply diverge. Just as Helms' appeals were more veiled than those of '50s segregationists like Mississippi Sen. James Eastland, the next generation of politicians will likely find even more oblique ways of dealing the racial deck. The question is whether the Republican Party will play along.

President George Bush is partly to blame for the Republican showing. As his own popularity sagged from his handling of the budget crisis, his party's candidates also lost ground. In the election's last weeks, Bush hoped for a repeat of 1962, when President John Kennedy's handling of the Cuban missile crisis turned an expected Democratic defeat at the polls into a stunning victory. But his on-again, off-again war talk against Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein only increased public uncertainty about the administration's Gulf strategy.

Under Bush's leadership, the Republican

Continued on page 11

IN THESE TIMES NOV. 14-20, 1990 3

By Joel Bleifuss

If the mud sticks, sling it

One of the problems with politics in the U.S. is "negative" campaigning: there isn't enough of it. To understand why, all you had to do was watch the network's hydra of talking heads on election night. One after another, in video litany, they bemoaned the fact that politics has gotten nasty. Not that it happened suddenly—remember the 1988 Democratic convention, when Ann Richards (the next Texas governor) had the temerity to ridicule George Bush the patrician for "being born with a silver foot in his mouth." Such strong language had never been heard at a nationally televised party convention. Commentators were taken aback by what they described as "a personal attack." Richards' words were mild—one could say much worse about Bush and still be on the mark.

Perhaps it would help revitalize the political process if candidates dropped the charade of discussing their opponents in muted, boring, easy-listening language. One of the lessons from last Tuesday's election is that mugwump Democrats like Dianne Feinstein of California and Neil Hartigan of Illinois lost, deservedly so. We would have a healthier political system if the public tuned out the disapproving clucks of media pundits and realized that there is nothing wrong, for example, with saying on national television that so-and-so is a whore who has sold himself to the petrochemical lobby—a description that applies to more than one politician from Texas.

Of course, using such language would not be polite—it is something done by ranting radicals, not civilized citizens. To that end—the preservation of the civilized status quo—the print and electronic media act as "schoolmasters of the people." One of their functions is to not give credence to political positions that are expressed with force and emotion, making sure they don't enter the public discourse. The corporate-owned media have, by example, set the standard for expression of political sentiment. The underlying message is that people should treat politicians and issues the way the press treats them, with the appearance of rational objectivity. Thus, as the media presents it, Jesse Helms and Harvey Gantt are the same product, but different brands. It doesn't matter that Helms is as close as we have to a fascist homeboy, that in the last days of the election he sent out 150,000 postcards to people in black neighborhoods warning them that violations of voter-residency requirements were "punishable by up to five years in jail," or that George Bush repeatedly campaigned for "my good friend" Jesse Helms.

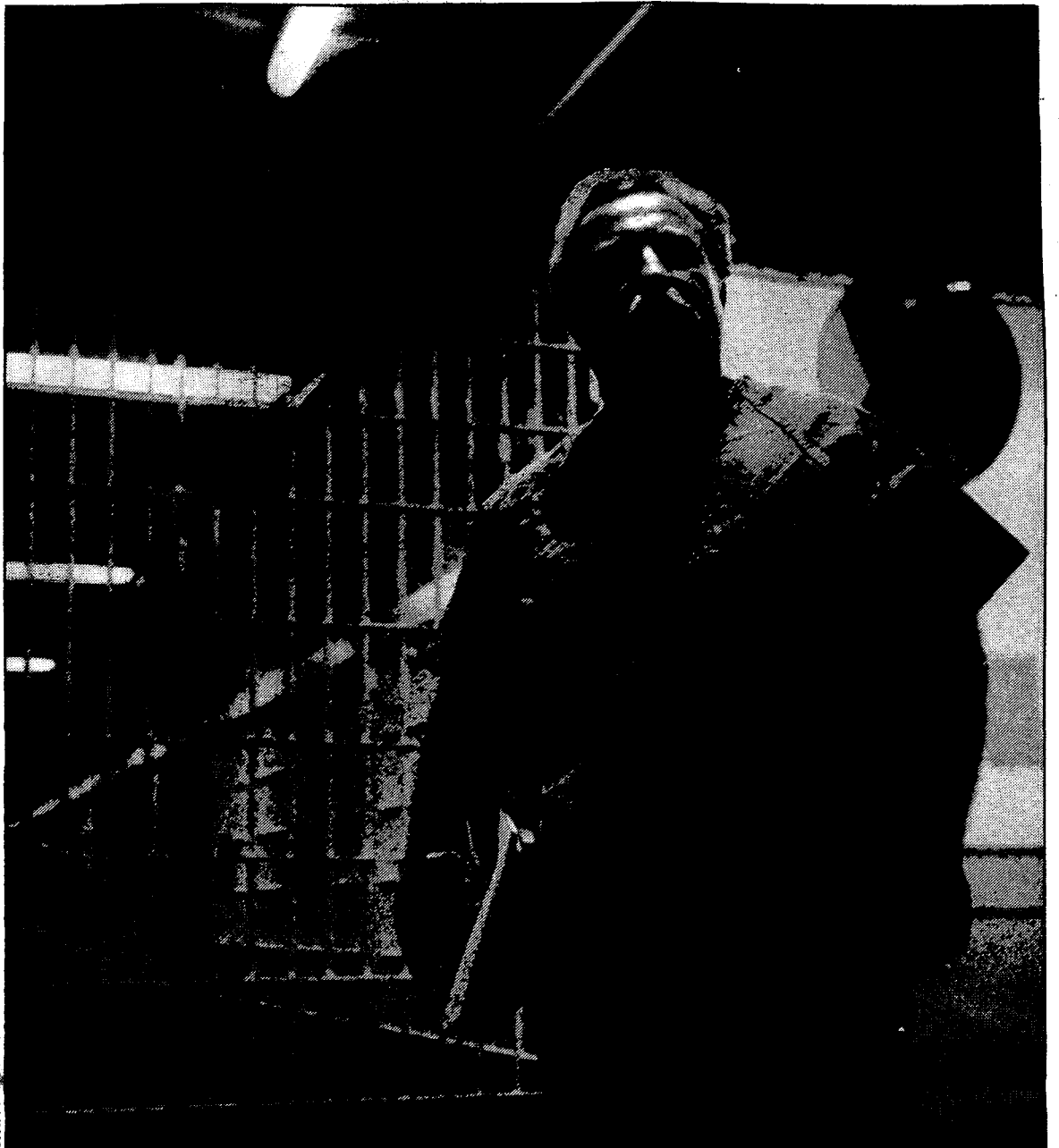
If the owners of the national press and major networks were to allow candidates like Helms to be presented in a subjective way, it would mean reporters would give us the benefit of their knowledge by offering their own analyses of who the candidates are and whether they should be elected. This would, of course, lead to blatantly biased reporting, but that is a politically healthier way of imparting electoral information than the present pretense of neutrality. Further, such subjective reporting would serve to expose the political agenda of the corporate media. Perhaps that is the reason it is not done.

Rats on the track?

In *The Culture of Consumption*, a collection of six essays that explore America's consumer society, Robert Westbrook presents a critical look at how, as he puts it, "voting has become for most Americans little more than one of a myriad of consumption choices in a high-intensity market." He writes, in part:

"The professional campaign manager relies heavily on two of the cornerstones of behavioral science: 'attitude' psychology, which has provided him with the social-psychological theory upon which his efforts at social engineering have been built, and survey research, which has given him a tool with which to keep the attitudes of large populations of voters under ready surveillance. ... But the hope of the political consultants for a science of 'attitude engineering' has proven difficult to realize ... and has been unable to deliver lawlike generalizations that could lead to the predictive control of voting. ... The failure of social science to provide campaign managers with the operational theory of their dreams has not, however, diminished the importance of attitude research in the merchandising campaign. ... He can use this intelligence to decide which issues or voting blocs require an emotional or angry presentation and which issues or blocs to treat logically or rationally. ...

"There are, of course, limits to the ability of consultants to package candidates, limits much greater than those facing commercial ad men. ... Candidates, unlike other commodities, have a



Federal inmate Dannie Martin reports on life behind bars.

Dannie Martin: writer with conviction

By Lisa Amand

Ever since he was hit over the head with a car jack and a full bottle of scotch in 1968, Dannie Martin hears only loud ringing in one of his ears. Chuckling, he reminisces about that 4 a.m. brawl in front of an all-night drive-in in Texas.

"Being deaf has saved a lot of my sanity," says the 51-year-old convict in a strong Southern accent. Martin has spent about half his life in reform school or behind bars. For the past 10 years he has lived in federal penitentiaries. The convicted bank robber and drug addict compares the noise in prison to "a gorilla cage at feeding time." Noise is only one of a myriad of irritations, indignities and injustices suffered by inmates—all subjects Martin has explored in the four years he has been contributing articles to the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

In the fall of 1986, he published "Requiem for Mr. Squirrel." The article read, in part, "Convicts always walk around a track counterclockwise, as if to deny time itself, as represented by the clock. It's a losing battle—time always wins. As the years go by, the exercise walks around the track at the prison's perimeter only get more boring.

"Four years ago this month, as my walking boredom threatened to become terminal, I met Mr. Squirrel on the yard here in Lompoc prison. Mr. Squirrel was indeed a squirrel and not the nickname of a bushy-haired convict with an overbite.

"He was only one of many squirrels that ventured in between the double prison fences and sat upon hind legs in attitudes of supplication, seemingly

preying for a morsel. We did throw them food, but mostly all we had was croutons sneaked out of the mess hall."

Martin went on to tell how he befriended this particular squirrel, which was later poisoned, along with others, by prison officials.

Each weekend his loyal readers open their papers to the "Sunday Punch" section to see if Martin has written a story that week. These days, however, his articles are not attributed to him. Instead, they carry the vague byline "A Federal Prisoner."

For the past several years the U.S. Bureau of Prisons (BOP) has tried to stop Martin from writing about prison life. So far, all that it has managed to take away is Martin's name and his meager pay. In 1988 Martin and the *Chronicle* filed suit against the BOP and Warden R.H. Rison. At the time he had already published 20 articles in the *Chronicle*. But prison officials didn't retaliate for his stories about Lompoc, the California prison where he was incarcerated, until he penned one titled "The Gulag Mentality." This critical account of the mean-spirited changes instituted by Rison, who was a new warden, described Lompoc as "a caldron of fear, hatred and violence."

Upon publication of that article, Rison put Martin in the "hole"—solitary confinement—saying he was concerned for Martin's safety and claiming he was inciting his fellow inmates to riot. Rison then transferred Martin to the Federal Correctional Institute near Phoenix, where he remains today. When later questioned about their actions, BOP officials said Martin had broken prison regulations that forbid inmates from acting as reporters—writing bylined ar-

ticles and being paid for their work.

Martin and the *Chronicle* contend these regulations are unconstitutional. Last December Martin went to San Francisco to attend a month-long trial wherein the government sought to prove that his writing had endangered security at Lompoc. In June, U.S. District Judge Charles Legge upheld the prison regulations. The case is being appealed.

Judicial constraint: Martin says that, given the nation's political mood, he was not surprised by Legge's opinion. "For the past 10 years, all the judges have been appointed by right-wing congressmen," he says. "They'll always come down on government's side. [In cases between the government and the convict] the convict will always lose."

Jeffrey Leon, the San Francisco attorney who represented Martin, calls Legge's opinion "light-years away from reality." He believes the case will end up in the Supreme Court. According to Leon, the ruling also discriminates against newspapers and magazines because inmates are allowed to appear on television and write books and screenplays.

In addition to losing his suit, Martin feels he has lost his identity as a writer. Excluding those Bay Area readers who know what's going on, people provoked by his stories will wonder who this prisoner is and if he is telling the truth. He says, "It throws my credibility into question. I should have my byline."

Yet the BOP still wields its power as a threat. Martin says he was recently called into the prison office for questioning. He was asked whether he is being paid, if his pay is being given to charity and if he indeed was the author of the *Chronicle* articles. Peter Sussman, who is Martin's editor at the *Chronicle*, calls the situation "a travesty and very South Africa-ish. It doesn't serve the readers or journalism."

According to Sussman, Martin's writings accumulate more weight and importance as society grapples with the urgent and unresolved issues of crime and punishment, builds more prisons and forces people to serve longer sentences.

Martin blames the news media for paying attention only to the most violent, sensational crimes. "The little run-of-the-mill crime doesn't get in the papers," he says. "It has to be a big dope deal or a big murder or something bizarre or something visible, something that excites negative emotions in the public. ... What they don't realize is most people in prison aren't violent ... maybe one in five. But in the public mind, it's just the other way around."

Martin maintains that the media's coverage of the prison system should include a prisoner's perspective. "A convict—and I'm talking about a hard-core convict like myself—has never been able to define his or her own criminality or a convict's habitat in a mainstream newspaper. It's never been done," he says. Gauging from the response to his articles, many in the public appreciate these glimpses behind prison walls.

Fettered minds: "People don't know," Martin adds. "They're living on stereotypes. A lot of them didn't have any idea that we had some humanity about us. They're watching TV, and they see a thug come on there, bust somebody's head and then he's gone. And he's got a scarred-up face and he's ugly. He doesn't have any family, he doesn't have any friends. Nobody loves him, he don't love nobody."

Martin has two brothers, a father who's ill and a daughter with whom he stays in loose touch. But the people who visit and write him in prison are his Bay Area readers.

He attempts to smash stereotypes of prisoners and replace them with human faces and voices. But there is another, larger issue Martin addresses—the U.S. prison system.

This is the gist of that message: "The Bureau of Prisons is a bureaucracy that's growing by leaps and bounds. It has acquired its own will to survive

and grow. And it does this on bodies, on people in prison. It's building all these factories to put people to work. And it's using the profits from the factories to build more prisons. It's really on a roll now with this industry. The Bureau of Prisons is making fortunes off of these factories. It has defense contracts, making cables for rockets and stuff like that. Fifty percent of prison industries have defense contracts—contracts with places prisoners can't even work when they get out because they can't pass security clearance.

"So you see what kind of profit potential is there. The BOP is using its profits to build more prisons. Its main objective is its own growth and expansion, not the stated goal of rehabilitating convicts. It doesn't take a profound thinker to know that if it rehabilitated all of us, what would happen to the BOP? It would be out of business."

Martin's stories are not only illuminating, they have achieved results. He once wrote about an inmate who was ignored after repeatedly asking for medical care and later died of a brain tumor. The story prompted an investigation. Another time he described the plight of a 23-year-old "career criminal" named Kevin Sherbondy who was serving a 15-year sentence for possession of an old broken gun. The story inspired a group of Bay Area businessmen to get Sherbondy a lawyer. His sentence was overturned on appeal, and he was released.

Elements of style: Martin says writing has been good for his mental health. Previously, he was "stagnating." He credits *Chronicle* editor Sussman for this turnabout. "I've learned a lot from him. I didn't know anything about newspaper writing when I wrote that first article [in 1986]."

"When he'd edit, he'd take out words, change a phrase around. I'd learn something from that, and I'd see exactly why he did that. I even learned how to use quotation marks, colons and stuff from his editing. I never had an English class."

During the trial, the defense asked Sussman to describe Martin's style. He put it this way: "A relaxed writer who writes engagingly and fluently and because of that is able to draw readers into the experience of what it's like to be inside prison."

Sussman says that working with Martin is a fascinating professional challenge. "We cannot communicate except by letter or collect calls," he says. "I can't check out information in the usual ways. The information is all filtered through Dannie, and [some of the jargon] I don't even have the ability to understand. But he's so anxious to learn this craft, he is working so hard, that he's a delight. And we're colleagues because we both believe it's essential for the tax-paying public to know what is going on in prison."

Even if Martin is not granted parole in February 1992 and must do additional time on his 33-year sentence, he will continue writing. He is trying his hand at short stories and has an unfinished novel and a wealth of ideas for screenplays. And then there is his most precious project, one he hopes will get published.

Martin, a big man and apparently tough, is enchanted with fairy tales. He is working on *Six Toes and the Lonely Isle*, a 12-chapter fable about an opium-eating dragon, bad goblins and good fairies. The tale carries a message—against using drugs.

"I know the psychology of drug addiction," Martin says, explaining that he was hooked for 30 years but has been clean for the past four.

"I've always wondered what made me take drugs. I've always thought about it," he says. Writing a fairy tale based on that experience is especially easy in prison. "You do all your research right in your head. If you need something, you can just reach in your imagination and pull it out." □

Lisa Amand is a freelance journalist based in Sonoma, Calif.

capacity and a propensity to depart from the script and talk themselves out of an election."

Iran-contra, a second gander

On Dec. 12, 1985, 256 U.S. servicemen died when the plane that was transporting them from Europe to the United States crashed in Gander, Newfoundland. Joe Conason reports in *Details* that the plane may have been sabotaged with a bomb in retaliation for the Reagan administration's reneging on an arms deal with Iran. According to Iran-contra documents, on November 25, 1985—one year before the Iran-contra scandal became public and three weeks before the Gander crash—the White House sent a shipment of weapons to Iran.

In return for the arms, Iran had agreed to pay \$18 million and release the hostages held by its client group, Islamic Jihad, in Lebanon. The shipment arrived in Iran on St. Lucia Airways, a CIA airline, but, according to the Iranians, the 18 Hawk missiles on board were not what they had ordered. Iranian Prime Minister Hashemi-Rafsanjani wrote President Reagan, "You have cheated us, and you must act quickly to remedy this situation." According to Iran-contra documents, in the following days North warned the National Security Council about "the likelihood of reprisals against us for 'leading them on.'" On December 9, North again warned that a "U.S. reversal now in midstream could ignite Iranian fire—hostages would be our minimum losses." On December 10, President Reagan and his national security staff decided to abandon their dealings with Iran (a decision that was reversed in January 1986). Two days later the jet carrying the 248 servicemen crashed and all were killed.

As the wreckage was burning, White House spokesman Larry Speakes announced that it was an accident, not the work of terrorists. Hours later, the Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility. Yet the official U.S. explanation held that the jet went down because of ice on the wings. There was no U.S. investigation of the crash. As Conason observes, "Such official indifference to what was, in fact, the worst aviation disaster in American military history (and an incident that killed more U.S. troops than the 1983 Marine barracks bombing in Beirut) seems incredible—especially from a government that invariably condemns the acts it calls 'terrorism.'" But if the above scenario is true, there is good reason for the administration to pass it off as an accident. The jet that was carrying the servicemen was owned by the CIA firm Arrow Air, a company that was also carrying weapons to the contras. Conason writes, "If the plane was indeed blown up by a terrorist bomb, anyone who looked too closely at Islamic Jihad or Arrow Air might have exposed the Iran arms sales almost a year before the scandal broke in 1986. Exposure at that stage, as Secretary of State George Shultz had told Reagan [at that time], would probably 'destroy your presidency.'"

S&L/CIA

The most underreported story of 1990—Pete Brewton's investigative reports in the *Houston Post* on the alleged involvement of the CIA and organized crime in the failure of 25 federally insured financial institutions—has made it to the cover of the current issue of *Columbia Journalism Review*. In his eight-page examination of Brewton's exposé and the resulting press coverage, Steve Weinberg, former head of the media organization Investigative Reporters and Editors, addresses Brewton's critics: "The reaction from most journalists has been ... muted. Few have praised Brewton's work unqualifiedly, and, by and large, the praise has come from journalists who are not part of the influential East Coast media that set the national news agenda. ... If Brewton's information is sound, the episode raises questions about why most news organizations have failed to assign their own reporters to the scandal and about whether the reaction might have been different had Brewton written the identical series for, say the *Washington Post*. ... Brewton permitted this reporter to examine numerous documents and to discuss human sources he could mention without breaking promises of confidentiality. The documentation was massive and impressive, but much of it could not have been divined simply by reading what appeared in the *Post*. Other journalists, unaware of the full extent of Brewton's research, wondered about the validity of all the linkages. ... A lot of journalists thought that the *Post* stories were filled with squishy speculation. As a result, they decided not to follow the paper's lead. ... Readers of the *Houston Post* [stories] necessarily lacked a sense of the weight of supporting evidence that could be gained only after days of reading through Brewton's massive files. ... [Houston Post executive editor C. David] Burgin [wrote], 'The *Post* will continue its investigation and hopes at the same time the national press, in the public's interest, will take a harder look.' Having studied Brewton's documentation, this reporter shares that hope."

And the winners are...

The nation's anti-political uprising was evident on election night in Connecticut, where the state's farthest left-leaning union turned out the vote to elect centrist gubernatorial candidate Lowell Weicker over Democratic congressman and career progressive Bruce Morrison. While Morrison had a more consistently liberal record in Washington, Weicker, a liberal Republican senator, had strong marks on labor, education, foreign policy and civil liberties issues, although he was weak on fiscal policy and the environment. But District 1199 of the New England Health Care Employees, along with other left-leaning unions, were disgusted at Morrison's abandonment of an urban agenda and aggressive efforts to portray himself as the most fiscally conservative candidate. After a career of fighting fellow Republicans on issues like Watergate and Jesse Helms' anti-homosexual crusade, Weicker tapped into the public's longing for independence and courage with a campaign pitch to throw out of power the two major parties.

- The same voters elected outspoken progressive Democrat Bill Curry, a former director of the national Freeze Voter organization, to the post of state comptroller (see *In These Times*, Oct. 24), a post he has vowed to make into a Nader's Raiders-style outfit. Gary Franks, a right-wing black Republican slumlord, doused white liberal Toby Moffett's comeback quest in the Fifth District—a district only 4 percent black but, despite its Democratic majority, increasingly dominated by blue-collar Reagan Democrats in national elections (see *In Person*, May 9).

- In the Third District, Ted-Kennedy-esque liberal Rosa DeLauro, a former director of a successful Washington lobbying effort to cut contra aid, squeaked by hard-right Republican Tom Scott by just two percentage points in an openly ideological slugfest (see *In These Times*, Oct. 24).

Unnatural selections

- Big Green, California's sweeping Environmental Protection Act initiative that was mostly a patchwork of failed legislation from the past eight years, was defeated along with most of the other 28 initiatives presented to voters at the polls this month (see *In These Times*, Oct. 3 and 31). Seen by most as too complicated to consider as a single bill, the components will have a better chance the third time around, with a new governor—Republican Pete Wilson—who is not overtly hostile to environmental issues, says Tracy Grubbs, communications director for the California League of Conservation Voters, a key sponsor of the failed initiative. (George Deukmejian vetoed 60 percent of environmental legislation during his tenure as governor.) "Big Green was another casualty of the Big No," adds Natural Resources Defense Council attorney Al Meyerhoff. "The same people who corrupted the legislative process subverted the initiative process. Corporations have created an environment of fear in what should be the people's court."

- A slick scare-tactic campaign, funded by big business, proved too much for an Oregon citizen's initiative calling for environmentally sound product packaging. Overshadowed by California's Big Green, the Oregon ballot was considered the toughest packaging proposal in the nation. It would have required that by 1993 all packaging in Oregon either be reusable, made of 50 percent recycled content, or made from materials being effectively recycled. Backers of the plan, which was defeated by a 3-to-2 margin, saw it as a way to hold accountable manufacturers of the packaging that comprises nearly a third of U.S. garbage and to prod industry to boost recycling rates of packaging materials, particularly plastics. Opponents of the measure received more than \$2 million in out-of-state money from such industry giants as Dow Chemical, Amoco and Chevron, and national manufacturers Proctor & Gamble and Phillip Morris. Proponents plan to introduce the bill into the Oregon legislature next year, as do consumer groups in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Vermont and New Mexico. A similar bill already is pending in the Massachusetts legislature.

Please send timely news about local activities, follow-ups on stories we've run or other interesting bits of information—including your address and phone number—to Kira Jones, *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647.

INSHORT



DuPont's road to genocide

Ecuador's Huaorani people are struggling to save their Amazonian homeland from the ravages of civilization.

DuPont, through its subsidiary Conoco Ecuador Ltd., wants to build a road and oil pipeline stretching 100 miles from the Napo River into Huaorani lands. The road will open the forest to settlers who will then chop down trees, overhunt and bring alcohol and diseases to which the Huaorani have no resistance. Company executives say they will start building the road "any day now."

The Huaorani were featured in a 1984 *Nova* documentary, "Nomads of the Rainforest," which was rebroadcast recently on public television. In it they demonstrated their stone axes, harvested manioc root, and hunted monkeys with blowguns and curare-tipped darts.

Blowguns won't work against DuPont's road, but the Huaorani are fighting back. Their new weapons are lawyers and direct action. The Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, based in San Francisco, filed a lawsuit in June before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (ICHR) against the Ecuadoran government. It charges that building the road would violate the Huaorani's human rights and threaten their cultural survival. It asks for a court order to prohibit the start of road-building until the case is resolved.

In 1985, the ICHR ruled in favor of

Brazil's Yanomami people when they faced similar danger. Unfortunately, the Brazilian government ignored the court order. Since then, Serra de Surucucus, a Yanomami community where mining activities are heavy, has suffered a 68 percent mortality rate. Villages where the miners are not as active have suffered less but are still greatly affected.

Would Ecuador's government obey an ICHR ruling? No one knows. So far, officials have behaved with cynical indifference toward the country's indigenous peoples, showing more interest in Amazonian oil, the country's main foreign-exchange earner.

DuPont isn't much better than the Ecuadoran government and has masterfully greenwashed its campaign against the Huaorani. The company has inoculated some Huaorani against a few diseases and says it won't build a bridge over the Napo River. That way, settlers will have to use boats or canoes to cross it. The road is only a three-day canoe ride from the rapidly growing town of Coca, but the company says it will guard its docks to turn away settlers. DuPont also promises to cluster its oil wells to reduce the number of clearings in the forest.

None of the techniques DuPont proposes to use to block settlers and to mitigate the environmental impact of oil drilling has ever been tested before. The evidence shows that settlers are cunning and the forest is fragile.

"We have an understanding now

of the relationship between destroying the environment, changing the indigenous culture and harming the lives of the individuals," says Karen Parker, a San Francisco-based international human-rights lawyer who is advising the Huaorani. "One-third to one-quarter of the individuals die immediately. They're in rags at the edge of the road two years later. The individuals die, and the culture is obliterated."

Even the World Bank—hardly a champion of the environment—refuses to fund Ecuador's oil sector because of its horrendous record in the Amazon.

The Huaorani's only hope lies in organized international pressure against DuPont and the Ecuadoran government. Environmental and human-rights groups are considering a boycott of Conoco's products, sold under the brand names Conoco and Jet. Supporters are also beginning a direct-action campaign to publicize the issue. In late August, members of Amazonia Por la Vida, a coalition of environmental and peace groups, non-violently occupied Conoco's headquarters in Quito to protest the company's reckless disregard for the Huaorani people. Their message was simple: do we need oil so badly that we'll commit genocide to get it?

For information, write Ivonne Yanez, Accin Ecolgica, Casilla 246-C, Quito, Ecuador. To tell Conoco what you think, write Alex Chapman, Manager, Environmental Protection Project, Conoco Ecuador Ltd., P.O. Box 2197, Houston, TX 77252.

—Rhona Mahony

By Adam Platt

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

JUST WHAT MINNESOTANS NEED, ANOTHER reason to be smug. They've got more than 10,000 lakes, few traffic jams and, now, the most progressive senator (-elect) in America. Paul Wellstone's victory over two-term incumbent Sen. Rudy Boschwitz has left-leaning Minnesotans in a self-congratulatory frenzy, and Wellstone (or "the professor," as Boschwitz calls him) isn't helping things with talk of cleaning up the environment, reforming the nation's educational policy and finding a "real, real cheap apartment" in Washington, D.C.

Wellstone's wit was evident in a post-election press conference when he described his campaign as "more important than me, larger than me—I'm only five-five-and-a-half and not five-four, *Pioneer Press*," referring to the St. Paul newspaper that reported his height incorrectly. "I have some power now," he added. "I can insist on these things."

The man John McLaughlin calls "the white Ron Dellums" pulled off the political upset of 1990. With 99 percent of precincts reporting, Wellstone masses beat out Boschwitz' with 52 percent of the vote (881,712) to Boschwitz' 48 percent (828,432). Pundits across the state are framing Wellstone's election two ways. If you're Republican, it's a fluke and Boschwitz was a victim of circumstance. If you're a Democrat, Minnesota is a harbinger of national political realignment, setting the agenda for the '90s, or what Wellstone calls the "we" decade.

He'll try harder: If this sounds like back-to-the-future rhetoric, it is. Wellstone's political values bear no resemblance to those that dominated the past two decades.

In his acceptance speech, Wellstone referred to the "incredibly sacred trust that I have been given. I will work so hard to live

Wellstone's Senate win bodes well for the left

up to your trust. I will work so hard to do well by you. I will work so hard to be a senator that you will be proud of."

He promised last week to limit his use of the federal franking privilege and develop more responsible fundraising strategies. He said he will serve no more than two terms in office. "I don't think I can go there and, through all the norms and the folkways, try to build up to the point where 28 years from now I'll be effective," he said. "So I have to try to have a big impact." He said he plans to pursue seats on the Senate Agriculture, Armed Services and Labor committees.

Finally, Wellstone intends to make his January move to Washington in the same old green school bus that he traveled in throughout his campaign.

His win has left-leaning Minnesotans in a self-congratulatory frenzy.

Buses aside, it's been more like an eight-week roller-coaster ride for Wellstone, the Carleton College political science professor who began his campaign on September 12 after winning Minnesota's Democratic primary. Outspent nearly 8-to-1 by Boschwitz, Wellstone relied on creative, if infrequent, campaign advertising and a committed, young organization to get out the vote.

After his election, Wellstone had a special message for those who helped elect him. "The support and enthusiasm of young people around Minnesota was unbelievable. And if there's anything I hope for, it's that while I'm in Washington ... my actions [will] convey to young people that politics is, indeed, not about money and power games but improvement of people's lives."

Less than three months ago, members of Wellstone's own Democratic Farmer-Labor (DFL) party were questioning whether he was too liberal for their own tastes. Luckily for Wellstone, Boschwitz was preoccupied with the budget crisis and let all but 3 percent of a once-27 percent lead slip away before returning to the state on October 25.

Turned off: A blistering and relentless series of negative Boschwitz advertisements occupied the last 10 days of the campaign, pushing him out to a nine-point poll lead the weekend before the election. The Republican's ads reeked of desperation and were often outright lies. One told seniors that Wellstone's strident advocacy of a national health plan would result in the forced closing of Mayo Clinic. Another assured the elderly they would be left writhing in pain waiting for emergency medical treatment—rationed due to bureaucratic control ("like in Canada").

Wellstone appeared in trouble—that is, until Boschwitz sent out what is now referred to here as "the letter." It was a note from

influential Jewish Boschwitz backers to Jewish Minnesotans. The letter claimed that Wellstone (like Boschwitz, a Jew) had not raised his children Jewish, since his wife Sheila is Christian. It questioned Wellstone's commitment to his faith, his people and the Israeli cause. (A tiny minority of Minnesotans are Jewish.) Although Boschwitz didn't sign the letter, his campaign paid for the mailing.

The letter outraged DFLers, generated angry newspaper editorials and appeared to turn the tide back in Wellstone's favor. A near 60 percent voter turnout didn't hurt either.

Although the national political climate certainly helped defeat Boschwitz, Wellstone loyalists insist he was the only Democrat who could turn out the popular Republican. Yet cynics say the budget mess and a sex scandal in the Minnesota Republican gubernatorial campaign doomed Boschwitz from the start. The extreme right wing of Boschwitz' party blamed him for pushing out gubernatorial candidate Jon Grunseth. These same Republicans are said not to have voted this year, as a payback to Boschwitz.

Three months ago, Wellstone's own party scoffed at his ideology and campaign strategy. After his victory last week, reporters asked if a man as far to the left as he can have any influence in a Senate dominated by Dale Bumpers, Ernest Hollings and Sam Nunn. He replied that the nature of politics is to have your finger to the wind, and he's busing off to Washington on the breezes of political realignment.

That's pretty big talk from a guy who stands five-foot-five-and-a-half, but if Paul Wellstone has taught Minnesotans anything since Labor Day, it's not to underestimate him. Just ask Rudy Boschwitz. □

Adam Platt is a staff writer for the *Twin Cities Reader*.

Another reason to cheer: Sanders makes the House

By Kevin J. Kelley

BURLINGTON, VT.

BERNIE SANDERS' REMARKABLE LANDSLIDE victory in Vermont's congressional race marks the climax of a relentless 20-year electoral march by the independent socialist.

According to unofficial returns, Sanders ousted first-term Republican incumbent Peter Smith by a whopping 18 percentage-point margin. The 49-year-old former mayor of Burlington received about 117,000 votes, or 57 percent, in the battle for the state's lone House seat, compared to Smith's 83,000, or 39 percent. Democratic nominee Dolores Sandoval, a politically inexperienced university professor, was barely a factor in the contest, picking up just 3 percent of the vote.

This was Sanders' seventh attempt at winning statewide office. Beginning in 1972, he campaigned repeatedly as a standard-bearer for Vermont's Liberty Union Party, which never managed to threaten what its supporters derided as "Republican" hegemony.

In 1986, five years into his eight-year tenure in Burlington's City Hall, Sanders ran for governor as an independent, once again finishing a distant third with 14 percent of the vote. But the Jewish native New Yorker,

who still speaks with a strong Brooklyn accent, fared far more impressively in 1988 when he came within 3 percentage points of defeating Smith for the open House seat. That contest, in which Sanders outpolled a well-known Democrat by a 2-to-1 margin, certified his electoral viability. No longer could he be credibly branded with the "spoiler" label attached to all of Sanders' previous bids for statewide posts.

Unreconstructed radical: Still, no one expected that the unreconstructed radical

No one expected that the unreconstructed radical Sanders would so thoroughly rout incumbent Peter Smith, who skillfully positioned himself within the tradition of moderate Vermont Republicanism.

would so thoroughly rout incumbent Smith, who skillfully positioned himself within the tradition of moderate Vermont Republicanism.

Sanders succeeded November 6 by replicating on a statewide level the coalition that enabled him to win four terms as Burlington mayor by increasingly comfortable margins. Beginning with a base of ideologically committed and well-educated young and middle-aged voters, Sanders fashioned a strong appeal to working-class and older Vermonters, many of whom normally vote for Republicans. It is this singular ability to find support across cultural lines that accounts for the first congressional victory by an independent socialist in over 40 years.

Sanders' basic message has changed little during the past two decades. He has consistently called for economic justice, demanding that corporations and wealthy individuals be taxed in accordance with steeply progressive rates. Sanders also emphasizes the need for national health insurance and opposes U.S. intervention abroad, though that stance has been tempered somewhat in regard to the current situation in the Persian Gulf.

In his most recent campaign, Sanders took pains to distinguish his own brand of politics from that practiced by party bosses in the former Soviet bloc. Stressing his respect for democratic values, Sanders explained that his vision of socialism has much in common with the Swedish system.

During the past few months, Sanders deliv-

ered few of his usual blasts against the Democratic Party. But as his stemwinding victory speech suggested, that was probably just a tactical decision. As long as the outcome was on the line, Sanders was careful not to offend the many prominent Vermont Democrats who spurned their party's own candidate and embraced the radical outsider. Seeking to counter charges that he would be isolated and ineffective on Capitol Hill, Sanders likewise pledged that, if elected, he would apply for membership in the House Democratic Caucus.

Third-party platform: However, there is little doubt, despite these alliances of convenience, that Sanders will use his congressional office as a platform for promoting third-party politics, both in Vermont and across the country. His efforts in that regard will be aided at home by two independent progressives who won seats in the Vermont legislature. Both are members of Burlington's Progressive Coalition, which continues to control the mayor's office in the state's largest city.

The grass-roots organization that may soon evolve into a full-fledged political party in Vermont deserves much of the credit for Sanders' runaway victory. A core of veteran organizers scattered around the state mobilized thousands of volunteers who distributed Sanders leaflets in trailer parks, suburban shopping malls and general stores in farming areas.

Smith's defeat can also be attributed, in

Continued on page 22

IN THESE TIMES NOV. 14-20, 1990 7

By Brett Campbell

AUSTIN, TEXAS

FOR MONTHS, TEXAS DEMOCRATS HAD DESPAIRED at State Treasurer Ann Richards' lackluster gubernatorial campaign, which failed to present her many qualifications and accomplishments and muffled her gregarious personality. Richards never really succeeded in giving swing voters a reason to punch her name on their cards. But, as it turned out, she didn't have to.

In the campaign's waning days, Clayton Williams, a millionaire Republican rancher and businessman, was slowed by a number of self-inflicted wounds that had the cumulative effect of sinking his \$20 million candidacy.

Bad ol' boy: Despite his genuine charm, Williams managed to tarnish his nice-guy cowboy image by behaving badly at several campaign stops. He called Richards a liar and refused to shake her hand at a joint Dallas appearance. Though he sought to portray this as a spontaneous response to a negative ad run by Richards, remarks recorded by a TV cameraman before the confrontation revealed it to be a carefully staged snub.

In another campaign blunder, Williams revealed during a television interview that he knew nothing about the sole referendum item on the ballot, even though it pertained to the governor's appointment power—and he'd voted in favor of it when he cast his ballot days earlier during the Texas early voting period.

Around the same time, newspaper reports

Richards squeaks past wealthy Texas cowboy

revealed the Williams' business empire was plagued with debt and lawsuits (which undercut his bottom-line image); that his huge farming operation had pumped dry a lovely spring (which flouted environmental concerns); and that his bank had forced poor people to buy unneeded credit insurance—at usurious interest rates—as a condition of obtaining car loans (which contrasted strikingly with Richards' late calls for insurance reform).

In the campaign's final week, Williams, who had refused to release his tax returns, admitted that he paid no federal income tax during 1986—the same year he contributed tens of thousands of dollars to political candidates. He dropped this bombshell at the exact moment when Republicans across the country were being blamed for a decade of

unfair, soak-the-working-class tax policies.

Richards got wind of the news and responded, "1986 was a tough year for teachers and pipe fitters too ... but they paid their taxes." She made the issue the centerpiece of her campaign in the last four days, even getting a TV ad on the air within hours.

Rich and crude: Suddenly, Williams was no longer a friendly good ol' boy made good. Instead, the new series of verbal missteps—coupled with his previous gaffes, including his infamous "relax and enjoy it" rape remark—showed Williams for what he was: just another crude, rich, businessman who wasn't above screwing the little guy to make his pile.

Williams' declining appeal showed up at the polls, and when a survey showed that Richards had almost entirely made up Williams' once-formidable lead with two weeks of campaigning to go, the news galvanized her supporters and dollars and volunteer efforts surged. Williams dismissed the poll results and joked that he hoped Richards, a recovering alcoholic, hadn't gone back to drinking.

Even in conservative West Texas, Williams' home territory, the rigidly right-wing Lubbock newspaper refused to endorse him. His willingness to spend \$20 million—twice

as much as Richards, and almost half of it his own money—and a nonsensical budget plan offended the rural area's traditional frugality.

In the Republican suburbs of Dallas and Houston, middle-class professionals were put off by Williams' crass remarks. And his rude personal attacks on Richards offended the sensibilities of chivalrous rural Texas, where you're supposed to treat a lady with respect. Richards became the first Democratic candidate for governor to take Dallas in a dozen years.

Overall, Richards got 18 percent of the Republican vote, while Williams pulled only 15 percent of self-described Democrats. She held a strong edge among the elderly and first-time voters. Meanwhile, as happened in the Democratic runoff, Richards' core support turned out much stronger than the media predicted.

Exit polls showed that Richards garnered 60 percent of the women's vote, in part because she ran a strong pro-choice campaign. Even though she lost the white vote, she took nine out of 10 black votes and won the important Hispanic vote by a 3-to-1 margin. In all, Richards received almost a million and a half votes and won by a 49.6 percent to 47.1 percent margin.

The governor-elect claimed victory at a party at Austin's Hyatt Hotel. At the end of her victory speech, she hoisted aloft a T-shirt portraying the state Capitol building. The shirt read, "A woman's place is in the dome." □

Brett Campbell is associate editor of the *Texas Observer*.

By Jennifer Wong

AUSTIN, TEXAS

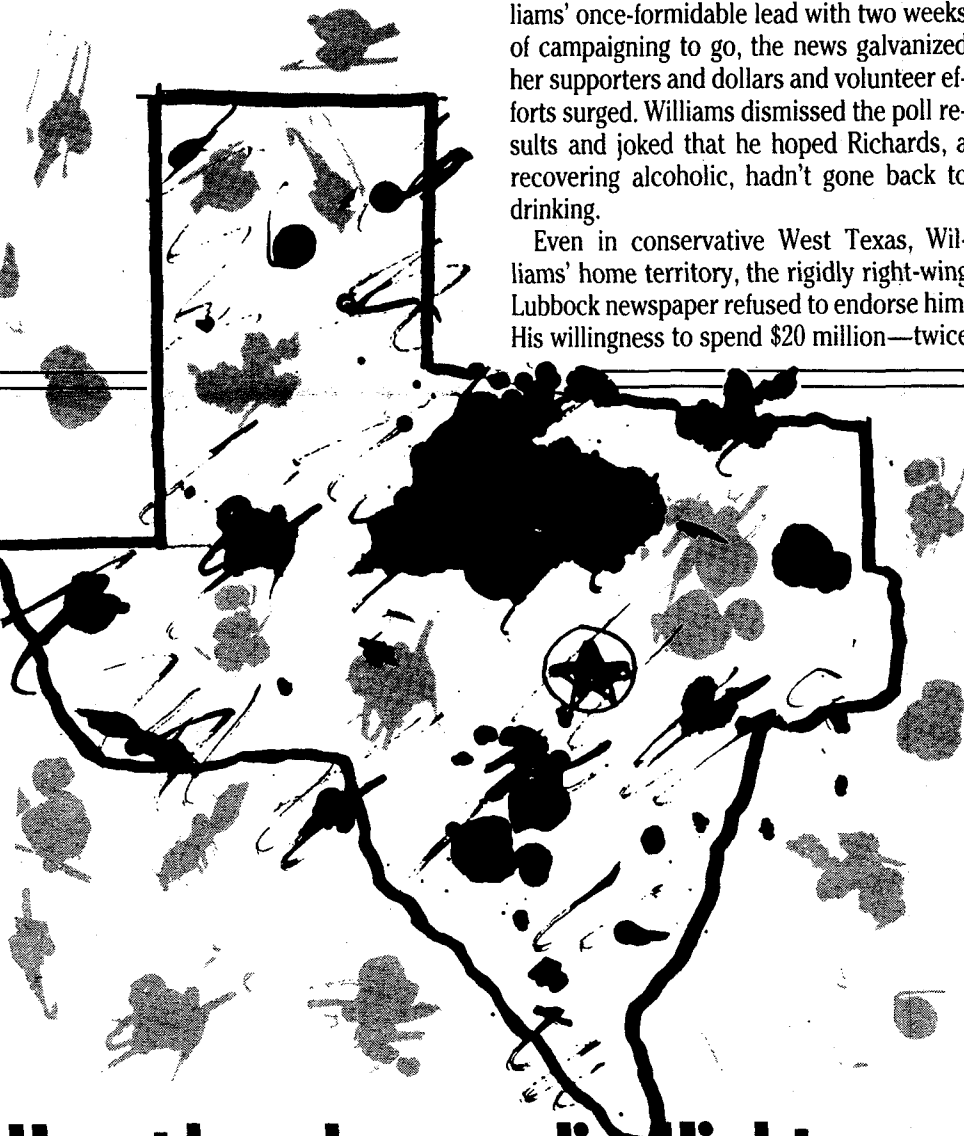
INCUMBENT AGRICULTURE COMMISSIONER JIM Hightower's upset defeat was a corollary to—and possibly a casualty of—Democrat Ann Richards' surprise victory in the governor's race. A nationally prominent populist who led the Democratic ticket in 1986, Hightower was expected to prevail in a race against state Rep. Rick Perry, a neo-Republican who last year jumped parties to challenge the popular farm leader.

Hightower had maintained a double-digit lead in several polls as late as one week before the November 6 election. But the chemical lobby, the Texas Farm Bureau, the National Republican Party and agribusiness opponents of Hightower raised millions for Perry, who launched a negative television campaign two weeks before the vote.

When Hightower desperately needed funding to buy air time to respond, the eyes of Texas—and, more critically, the money—had already turned to the governor's race, where Richards was closing in on Clayton Williams.

As a colorful maverick who has taken on "the bankers, bullies, big boys and bastards" throughout his political life, Hightower is no stranger to hardball politics. Eight years ago he defeated a conservative Democratic incumbent then turned a sleepy 600-employee bureaucracy into a consumer-service and environmentally oriented agency where officials would say, "If you eat, you're involved in agriculture."

Hit by the hard ball: During the past few years Hightower has come under attack in the Texas legislature, where a Republican governor has led the fight to cut Department of Agriculture funds and strip the commissioner of his authority to regulate agricul-



Upset knocks populist Hightower out of Texas agricultural office

tural pesticides.

In the last legislative session the governor, the Texas Farm Bureau and the Chemical Council joined in an effort to make Hightower's position appointed rather than elected. When that failed, the Farm Bureau and the governor even proposed dismantling the Department of Agriculture and leaving Hightower without an agency.

After the session, the Texas Farm Bureau wrote to its national lobbyist, asking that U.S. Agriculture Secretary Clayton Yeutter be enlisted in an effort to investigate Texas' Department of Agriculture. For the past year

a San Antonio federal attorney has presided over an FBI investigation of the agency. By the time Hightower's campaign began, the investigation had become the poorest-kept secret in the state capital.

But it was television that finally undermined Hightower's popularity. Two to three weeks before the election, the Perry campaign made large media buys in Dallas, Houston and the Panhandle.

In one ad, Hightower's face was superimposed on the image of a flag burner, while a voice-over asked, "Does this man represent your values?" Another targeted Hightower's

Democratic primary endorsement of Jesse Jackson, while a third ad raised questions about the FBI investigation—which after almost a year has discovered no indictable offense.

Too late: With a \$750,000 budget—\$120,000 going to radio commercials—Hightower said he simply could not afford to buy time on television. When he realized that he had to respond, it was too late. Hightower said that in the final weeks of his campaign, he made personal phone calls to contributors who assumed his race was won and were moving their money to the governor's race.

"I stand before you a living breathing example of a candidate who now knows that you cannot let television ads—negative personal-attack ads—go unanswered for that period of time," Hightower said in a concession speech the day after the election. He lost by a margin of about 1 percent—40,000 votes.

Few expected Hightower's defeat. Not the press, which largely ignored the race; not even the Republicans, for all the money they had spent; and not Hightower himself, who had rejected the idea of a U.S. Senate campaign against Republican Phil Gramm—in order to keep what everyone thought was a safe elected office and a base from which to organize.

Hightower said he has no idea what he's going to do after his term ends but emphasized, "I am not going to go away. I come to my politics not through any particular office that I might hold but through a set of values and principles that I advance. I'm going to continue to do that whether in office or out of office." □

Jennifer Wong is a *Texas Observer* editorial intern.

By Gary Rivlin

SAN FRANCISCO

ANGRY AND FED UP, CALIFORNIA VOTERS overwhelmingly approved a severe term-limits initiative meant to reduce the influence of special interests and lobbyists in Sacramento. But whether Proposition 140 will bring the reforms voters seek is doubtful. The initiative was as crass and cynical a power grab as any back-room deal.

Prop 140 imposes a lifetime ban on Assembly members after six years in office. State senators and other statewide elected officials can serve a maximum of eight years. Foes of Prop 140 are certain to challenge in court the constitutionality of lifetime term limits.

The measure was written in part by a conservative Los Angeles County supervisor named Peter Schabarum, who was motivated neither by concern with the power of special interests nor the need for new blood in politics. Schabarum is a career politician—serving more than 20 years as a county supervisor—who saw an opportunity to reverse the Republican Party's poor showing in the state legislature, where there are 70 Democrats to 45 Republicans.

The initiative's other author was Lewis Uhler, president of the National Tax Limitation Committee. The Prop 140 campaign received most of its money from Southern California real-estate developers in tight with Schabarum.

George Bush, in one of his six campaign swings through California on behalf of Republican gubernatorial candidate Pete Wilson, endorsed Prop 140. So did Vice President Dan Quayle when he was here to campaign on Wilson's behalf. Bush was ironically frank about his reason for coming out in favor of the initiative: "Democrats, including Pete's opponent, don't understand the mood of the country, which is why they are not supporting term limits."

Wilson's unbroken tenure as an elected official dates back to 1966. Yet he, too, endorsed Prop 140. In the closing weeks of the governor's campaign, with polls showing him in a dead heat with Democrat Dianne Feinstein, Wilson made the increasingly popular term-limits proposal a cornerstone of his campaign.

Money talks: Voters had plenty of cause for a reaction that was more visceral than thoughtful. When insurance reform was an issue in California, the insurance lobby spread millions around Sacramento—\$3.8 million in contributions to California state legislators in 1988 alone. The trial lawyers, worried that an alternative no-fault insurance measure would cut into their business, responded with big-dollar contributions of their own. Lawmakers satisfied both the insurers and the lawyers by taking no action on insurance reform.

The alcohol industry purchased favors of their own. A beer-wholesalers group spent nearly \$600,000 in the last three years to buy influence in Sacramento, according to the public interest group California Common Cause. Anheuser-Busch donated \$250,000 over that period, and the Wine Institute kicked in another quarter of a million. Is it merely coincidence that California has some of the lowest state alcohol taxes in the country? The last change in the wine tax was in 1937, when the state reduced it from two cents to one cent a gallon.

Imposing term limits appears to be a way

Term limits and GOP nab the Golden State

of lessening the influence of lobbyists and special interests—a way of "draining the swamp," said Jim Wheaton, head of California's Common Cause and manager of a rival term-limits measure that failed. But the case can be made that Prop 140 will do precisely the opposite.

"The effect here is that the lobbyists and the bureaucrats and the special interests will only have more power," said one Sacramento-based lobbyist who represents an assortment of progressive causes. "You're going to have green legislators who have no sense of history relying on us to fill in the gaps."

Prop 140 also slashes the size of a legislator's staff, thereby hindering a legislator's ability to independently research an issue.

The lifetime ban, the lobbyist said, "will only mean that an already overly ambitious group of people will be competing that much harder for higher office." Once a member reaches the six- or eight-year limit, he or she cannot simply sit out an election and run again two years later.

Expressions of disgust: The term-limits initiative seems little more than the ballot-box equivalent of a carnival attraction featuring a beat-up car and a sledge hammer—something that offers momentary relief but nothing else. Yet the significance of the pro-140 vote cannot be underestimated.

California is not the first state where the prevailing disgust with politics has led to term limits. Oklahoma voters supported term limits in September, as did a majority of the electorate in Colorado last week. (The Colorado ballot measure limited that state's U.S. senators and representatives to 12 consecutive years in office.)

But now, because one of every eight Americans lives in California, the state has added a particularly loud voice to the throw-the-bums-out chorus breaking out around the country.

The governor's race between Pete Wilson and Dianne Feinstein was its own sustained campaign ad in favor of term limits. The two, as if by agreement, ignored most of the big issues confronting the state, such as a projected \$3 billion to \$4 billion budget deficit next year. Instead, they fought over the obscene amount of money each raised—more than \$35 million between them—and battled over who failed more miserably as a city manager, Wilson (mayor of San Diego for 11 years) or Feinstein (mayor of San Francisco for nine). Until the last few weeks of the campaign, both candidates made few public appearances, instead spending their time at private fundraisers held to underwrite expensive TV campaigns.

There is reason, however, to mourn Feinstein's narrow defeat—in large part because of California's influence over national politics. Before election day, the Republican Party's political director, Norman Cummings, and the Democratic Party's chairman, Ron Brown, described the California gubernatorial race as the single most important election in the country—or, as Cummings

put it, "the biggest prize going."

Strategists for both parties were no doubt thinking back to 1981 and the gerrymandering accomplished by a wily San Francisco Democrat named Phil Burton. So effective was Burton's plan, approved by the Democratic legislature and signed by Democratic



Democrat Dianne Feinstein: she lost what party heads called "the biggest prize going."

Gov. Jerry Brown, that the Republican congressional candidates actually won a majority of the votes statewide in 1984 but accounted for just 17 of California's 45 congressional seats.

California's explosive population growth entitles the state to at least seven more congressional seats—meaning California's delegation of 52 will account for one of every nine people serving in the House. A Democratic governor would have meant that the Democrats would again dominate the California delegation. But now Wilson can veto any Democratic plan, and the Democrats do not have the two-thirds votes to override his veto. The delegation will most likely return to its pre-Burton state, when it was split about evenly between the Democrats and Republicans.

Republican Governor-elect Pete Wilson's unbroken tenure as an elected official dates back to 1966. Yet he, too, endorsed the term-limits initiative in the closing weeks of the governor's race, making the proposal a cornerstone of his campaign.

Feinstein, to her credit, did not seek the moderate middle like Michael Dukakis in 1988 or so many other Democratic hopefuls before him. She promised to sign proposed legislation requiring that all employers offer health insurance, and she advocated increasing the state income tax by 2 percentage points on those individuals earning in excess of \$100,000. Feinstein publicly opposed David Souter's confirmation as a Supreme Court justice and promised to restore full funding to California's Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

More of the same: Wilson's record indicates his administration will likely prove indifferent to the poor and working classes. Elected to the Senate in 1982, Wilson was a staunch Reagan supporter. In 1984, the *National Journal* rated Wilson 79 percent conservative on economic issues, 64 percent conservative on social issues and 81 percent conservative on foreign policy. He supported every major weapons system proposed by the Pentagon and was an outspoken advocate of Star Wars.

Last month Wilson was back in Washington to support President Bush's veto of the Civil Rights Act of 1990. Feinstein harped on Wilson's vote, correctly pointing out that the bill would have passed had Wilson voted in favor of an override. Feinstein also declared that the Republicans were the "save the rich" party. Wilson responded that Feinstein was guilty of "desperation tactics" that "seek to divide California." "There's something a little pathetic in a campaign that depends on dividing Californians, dividing cities against rural areas, the rich against the poor and black against white," he said the weekend before election day.

Yet it was Wilson, if anybody, who played to race. In a state where minorities account for 42 percent of the population, Feinstein's political ads showed black, Asian and Latino faces. Wilson's ads, in contrast, showcased blond-haired white people in suburban surroundings. He also incessantly characterized Feinstein as nothing but a pawn of the state's most powerful black political figure, Assembly Speaker Willie Brown.

Ironically, Brown is accused of costing Feinstein the election. Critics argue that he placed defeat of term limits ahead of every other issue, steering millions in campaign contributions to the anti-Prop 140 campaign. Jerry Brown, who now heads the state Democratic Party, is also blamed, in large part because the Republicans funded a \$7 million get-out-the-vote drive that far exceeded anything even attempted by the Democrats.

Others charge that Feinstein's loss was nothing more complicated than sexism. Those putting forward this point of view point to polls indicating that the undecided voters were swayed by two perceptions—that Wilson would be tougher on crime and that he would be better able to handle the economy in these tough times. Given that she lost by only a few percentage points, there's no reason to question that her gender played a role in voters' minds.

Only late in the campaign did Feinstein aggressively highlight the populist themes in her message. In the final days she ran as much against Reaganomics and Bush as against Wilson, hitting at "policies of greed" that "widened the gap between rich and poor." Her late surge in the polls suggests that she must shoulder blame for not sparking enthusiasm for these themes earlier in the campaign.

IN THESE TIMES NOV. 14-20, 1990 9

By David Moberg

CHICAGO

Populist themes and politics of rich and poor

IS THE U.S. HEADING TOWARD AN ERA OF "THE politics of rich and poor," as conservative Republican strategist Kevin Phillips predicts? The post-election tea leaves reveal dramatic signs of success for candidates advocating government for the majority, not the rich. But any emerging populist sentiments are tempered by ambiguous feelings about taxes.

The upset victories of Paul Wellstone for Senate in Minnesota and independent socialist Bernie Sanders for Congress in Vermont (see stories page 7) are the most striking: each candidate ran a strong grass-roots campaign stressing issues of class injustice and government favoritism of the rich.

But other Democrats scored with these issues as well. Incumbent Iowa Democratic Sen. Tom Harkin, who also benefited from organized pro-choice voter support against a strongly anti-abortion challenger, had long campaigned on themes of the rich having too much power over government. Other Midwestern populists, such as Reps. Jim Jontz (D-IN) and Lane Evans (D-IL), won re-election handily despite the historic Republican character of their districts. Illinois Sen. Paul Simon, whom Republicans saw as vulnerable for his liberal voting record, soundly defeated a moderate Republican, Lynn Martin.

Populist themes—and a grass-roots campaign style eschewing big-bucks politics—helped Lawton Chiles defeat Florida Republican Gov. Bob Martinez and may have contributed to Washington Rep. Jolene Unsoeld's success in hanging on to her vulnerable seat. Such themes helped but didn't do the trick for Democratic challengers Harvey Sloane in Kentucky and Paul Hubbert in Alabama. And Texas Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower, the leading intellectual figure in the revival of populist strategies among Democrats, suffered a narrow, deeply disappointing defeat in his re-election bid (see story page 8).

Pursuing another populist angle, some challengers won by attacking incumbents' involvement in the savings and loan debacle: Democrat Calvin Dooley ousted Charles Pashayen Jr. in California, and Mike Kopetski bested Denny Smith in Oregon. But Rep. Frank Annunzio (D-IL), who had received contributions and favors from thrifts while heading the congressional committee overseeing the industry, beat back a strong challenge from a flag-waving conservative Republican.

Overall, Democrats undoubtedly gained as President Bush's ratings plummeted in recent weeks, largely because of his stumbling, crude fight against taxes for the rich in this year's budget battle. Yet many Democrats were unprepared to take full advantage of this windfall. Bush's action renewed strong voter identification of Republicans as the party of the rich and the Democrats as the party of the poor or working people, but many Democrats seem to have forgotten how to play the role assigned to them.

Big mistake: Indeed, several Democrats chose to abandon liberal ground in favor of courting "Reagan Democrats" with conservative strategies. They then lost the support of many hard-core Democrats, and, as a result, their elections. In Illinois, for example, Republican Jim Edgar narrowly defeated

Democrat Neil Hartigan, largely because a significant chunk of Chicago Democrats—middle-class liberals and blacks—abandoned Hartigan. The Democrat had run against extending a temporary income-tax surcharge to pay for education and urban needs that the Republican supported. Also, many Chicago blacks—finding little appeal in Hartigan's campaign, distrusting him in any case and possibly feeling torn over the campaign of a new independent black political party—simply stayed home.

Extremely low turnout by Detroit African-Americans largely accounted for the surprising defeat of Michigan Democratic Gov. James Blanchard. The two-term incumbent ran a largely negative campaign, devoid of issues and targeted at Reagan Democrats in areas such as Macomb County, according to former Democratic Party State Chairman Zolton Ferency. Yet liberal Democratic Rep. David Bonior recaptured his seat in blue-collar Macomb, outside of Detroit.

In Massachusetts, conservative Democrat John Silber also lost, mainly because many Democrats—blacks, liberals and union members—shunned him because of his conservative views.

Abandoning the Democratic base proved an unwise strategy. But some Democratic gubernatorial candidates, such as Joan Finney in Kansas, Ben Nelson in Nebraska, David Walters in Oklahoma, Bruce Sundlun in Rhode Island and Chiles, may have won in part because of voter opposition to tax increases under incumbent Republican governors. Reagan-Bush policies have forced more responsibilities on the states, forcing governors and legislatures throughout the country to raise taxes (such as the New Jersey increases that generated enough anger to nearly swamp Sen. Bill Bradley), and state taxes tend to be more regressive than federal income tax.

Most voters appear torn over taxes: even though the United States is comparatively lightly taxed, Americans strongly resist higher taxes in general. They also feel—with

Election results reveal dramatic success for advocates of government for the majority.

some justification—that they are not getting enough for their money. In general, people seem grudgingly willing to pay higher taxes if they are convinced the money is needed and will go for things they believe in—for example, better education, a cleaner environment and care for the elderly. In many instances, however, Americans express schizoid attitudes toward government: they want better public services but don't want to pay for them.

Swing votes: Voters had complex reactions to taxes. For example, at a political rally featuring George Bush in the Republican stronghold of DuPage County, near Chicago, Republican Steve Miller, an insurance agent, said, "I don't like [the higher state income tax] as an individual, but I respect Edgar's position for telling it like it is"—that is, that the taxes are needed. Miller was also voting for liberal Sen. Paul Simon, whom his opponent labeled a "tax and spend" Democrat because "he's a people's man."

Likewise, retired businessman and home-maker Tom and Charmaine Skweres also were concerned about gubernatorial candidate Edgar's support for higher income taxes: "We'd rather he didn't, but if it's necessary it's not something that would change our minds." Lifelong Republicans, they too were voting for Simon. They feared Martin was less supportive of Social Security.

Americans clearly expressed their belief in surveys this fall that the rich should pay a greater share of taxes, and in a Gallup poll last May two-thirds of respondents said they thought wealth should be distributed more evenly.

But sentiments of hostility toward the rich or in favor of equality are comparatively weak. In part that's because no political party or leader has cultivated such views, in part because of traditional American beliefs in freedom of opportunity and the gold prospector's mentality that "some day even I might be rich." Although income and wealth are more inequitably distributed in the U.S. than in any other major industrialized country, a 1987 National Opinion Research Center survey showed that Americans were much less likely than Western Europeans to believe that income differences were too large.

American perceptions of the unfairness of inequality are also greatly confounded by race. Many whites—and not only in Jesse Helms' North Carolina or in politically divided cities like Chicago—find it difficult to identify with calls for stronger, more progressively financed government if they think it will benefit "undeserving" minorities. The fall elections give strong—if not unclouded—evidence that the Democrats can gain coherence as a party and support from their traditional base if they attack privilege for the rich and argue for making government an instrument to help the broad majority of low- to middle-income working people.

But tax fairness is simply one small part of the picture. As Democratic pollster and consultant Celinda Lake argued, "The Democrats have still not articulated an economic viewpoint. The voters are still split on whether Democrats or Republicans are better on the economy. They need to turn the 'on our side' issue into a positive appeal."

Fleshed out with more substance and pursued with meaningful vigor, not just as a superficial campaign ploy, the populist "politics of rich and poor" may indeed revive the welfare of the country as well as Democratic electoral fortunes. □

Illinois Sen. Paul Simon, seen as vulnerable for his liberal record, trounced Republican Lynn Martin.



Adam Harris

By Barry Yeoman

DURHAM, N.C.

North Carolina fails to still Helms' high waters

HARVEY GANTT SENSED THE CHAOS THE moment he pulled up to his Durham County campaign office. Under the best of circumstances, he knew, the race to unseat conservative Sen. Jesse Helms would be close. But now, on election night, 20 minutes before the polls were scheduled to close across the state, disaster had struck the black Democrat's strongest urban bastion.

In almost half the local precincts, the polling machines had broken down, forcing voters to stand in two-hour lines that snaked around lobbies and across parking lots. The malfunctions occurred in some of Gantt's most loyal neighborhoods, and the Board of Elections seemed to be taking its sweet time printing up substitute paper ballots.

Seizing a chance to curtail the heavy black vote, state Republican leaders were looking for a federal judge to overturn a court order extending Durham's voting hours.

"They're doing their damndest to steal this election," grumbled Gantt's press secretary, Susan Jetton, as she stood in the lobby of Durham's First Presbyterian Church. Gantt himself, with no time to grumble, made his way down a line of voters, pleading with them not to go home before casting their ballots. "I'm very concerned that we don't lose voters, that the voters don't lose courage and faith tonight," he warned.

His last-minute appeals were in vain. Four hours later, standing at a podium in a packed Raleigh hotel ballroom, Gantt conceded the election to three-term incumbent Helms. Gantt had mounted a tough campaign to become the South's first African-American U.S. senator since Reconstruction, but Helms' own last-minute appeals—to the racial fears of white voters—cost Gantt the election.

Last vestige: In a state that produces some of the nation's most timid Democratic politicians, Gantt refused to soft-pedal his liberal convictions. The former Charlotte mayor called on Congress to shift the nation's tax burden from the middle class to the rich and to use that tax money for social programs rather than new weapons. He talked about providing health insurance for

the nation's poor. And even while under fire from Helms, he steadfastly maintained his support for gay rights and his opposition to the death penalty.

Most often, Gantt attacked Helms as the last vestige of a world that no longer exists. He cited the senator's votes against the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act, his opposition to all federal education spending and his proposed legislation to outlaw abortion, even for rape and incest survivors.

"The world is watching North Carolina,"

Jesse Helms' own last-minute appeals to the racial fears of white voters cost Gantt the election.

he warned. "The election is a referendum ... on whether we care about our children, our environment, our health, the least of those among us, or whether we are going to be caught up in our old habits, whether we will allow our worst instincts, our worst fears to guide us in the years ahead."

His appeals worked. Through the fall, Gantt surged ahead in the polls, outpacing Helms by 8 percentage points three weeks before the election. As Helms awkwardly tried to defend his voting record, even Republicans began crossing party lines.

"Jesse Helms has done a lousy job," said Republican David Carpenter, a Charlotte student who voted for George Bush in 1988. "His stance on education and the environment—he really doesn't support those things, and he doesn't try to hide it."

But in the campaign's closing days, Helms resorted to the same tactic that he has suc-



Gantt: victim of race-baiting circumstance.

cessfully used for 40 years: race-baiting. He accused Gantt of running a "secret campaign" on black radio stations and warned of the perils of "forced busing, neighborhood schools wrecked." He ran commercials linking Gantt to the failed "Soul City" project and to Jesse Jackson, the Democrat's high-school football buddy. Most damaging, the senator ran ads accusing Gantt of supporting racial hiring quotas. (In fact, Gantt opposes them.)

"The Helms campaign was very effective at dropping the hammer of racism in the last week," said former *Charlotte Observer* reporter Ken Eudy, who briefly directed the North Carolina Democratic Party. "They brought out the worst in some of us, and that prevailed."

Finally, the Republican Party sent out 150,000 postcards, most of them to black voters, falsely claiming that people would be stopped from voting if they had moved within the last month. The cards, labeled "Voter Registration Bulletin," threatened recipients with up to five years in jail if they gave false information to poll workers. Amy Casner of the U.S. Justice Department's Civil Rights Division called the cards "false and misleading [and] almost intimidating," according to the *Washington Post*.

New coalition: Although Gantt lost in the rural white counties, he fared better in North Carolina's metropolitan areas, even carrying many of the Republican-leaning suburban neighborhoods that ring Raleigh. If there is a silver lining for Democrats, it is that a Southern candidate can run tough on issues such as environmental protection and abortion rights—and fare well, particularly in urban areas.

Just as important, the Gantt campaign has drawn whole new groups of citizens into electoral politics. Black registration shot up more than 10 percent in the months preceding the election. And many politically aware North Carolinians—artists, environmentalists, lesbians and gay men and peace activists—have jumped into electoral politics for the first time in their lives.

For instance, this election saw the formation of North Carolina Senate Vote '90, an anti-Helms group that began in the gay community but spread to other issue-oriented groups. The Durham-based committee raised more than \$100,000 for voter registration, education and turnout, including a series of tough radio ads that received only modest air play.

Senate Vote '90 lost its first election—but the group that coalesced to unseat Helms will not go away any time soon. □

Barry Yeoman is the associate editor of *The Independent* in Durham, N.C.

Democrats

Continued from page 3

Party is coming apart. His and Republican National Committee Chairman Lee Atwater's strategy of reorienting the party toward middle-class suburbanites was severely set back by the defeats of party moderates Martin and Rhode Island Rep. Claudine Schneider, who lost her bid to unseat Sen. Claiborne Pell. At the same time, the conservative strategy of uniting upper-class Republicans with blue-collar Democrats failed everywhere except North Carolina and Alabama. Already internally split on taxes and abortion, Republicans may also be heading for a showdown on foreign policy.

But if the Republicans are falling into an abyss, the Democrats have yet to climb out of one. The Democrats remain a collection of local parties that function best when they can tailor their message to state or district voters. Successful Democratic Sen. candidate Paul Wellstone hit the appropriate left-liberal notes in Minnesota, but he would have been lucky to get 40 percent of the vote against Texas Republican Sen. Phil Gramm.

(Witness the defeat in Texas of populist Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower [see story page 8].)

The Democrats do not have a constructive national message, whether on foreign policy (which they avoided altogether) or on the economy. As voters become more concerned about the country's economic future and less worried about U.S.-Soviet relations or about parochial social issues such as gun control, the Democrats have yet to address seriously the decline of American industry and the soaring national trade and budget deficits.

Their current strategy of currying middle-class resentment of the rich is a political ploy, not an economic program. It is based on a misreading of Kevin Phillips' recent bestseller, *The Politics of Rich and Poor*. Fascinated by his damning statistics, the Democrats failed to read the book's last chapter, in which Phillips argues that a soak-the-rich strategy will not cause the middle class to reject its Reagan-era alliance with the rich. His point has been demonstrated conclusively in New Jersey. Instead, Phillips calls for the parties to frame their economic ap-

peals within a "new nationalism" that speaks directly to the country's severe economic ills.

In addition to lacking a message, the party also does not have a clear presidential choice for 1992. Bradley and New York Gov. Mario Cuomo were both damaged by the election. Cuomo got only 53 percent of the vote against a Republican repudiated by members of his own party, and over the next two years Cuomo faces the kind of economic problems in New York that doomed Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis. Jesse Jackson easily won election as Washington D.C.'s "shadow senator," but still got only 45 percent of the vote. Few outside of the Rainbow Coalition believe that Jackson could win the presidency, let alone the nomination. Of the 1988 presidential candidates, only Tennessee Sen. Al Gore exhibited real strength at the polls, winning 70 percent, but while stumping for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1988, he suffered a recurring identity crisis.

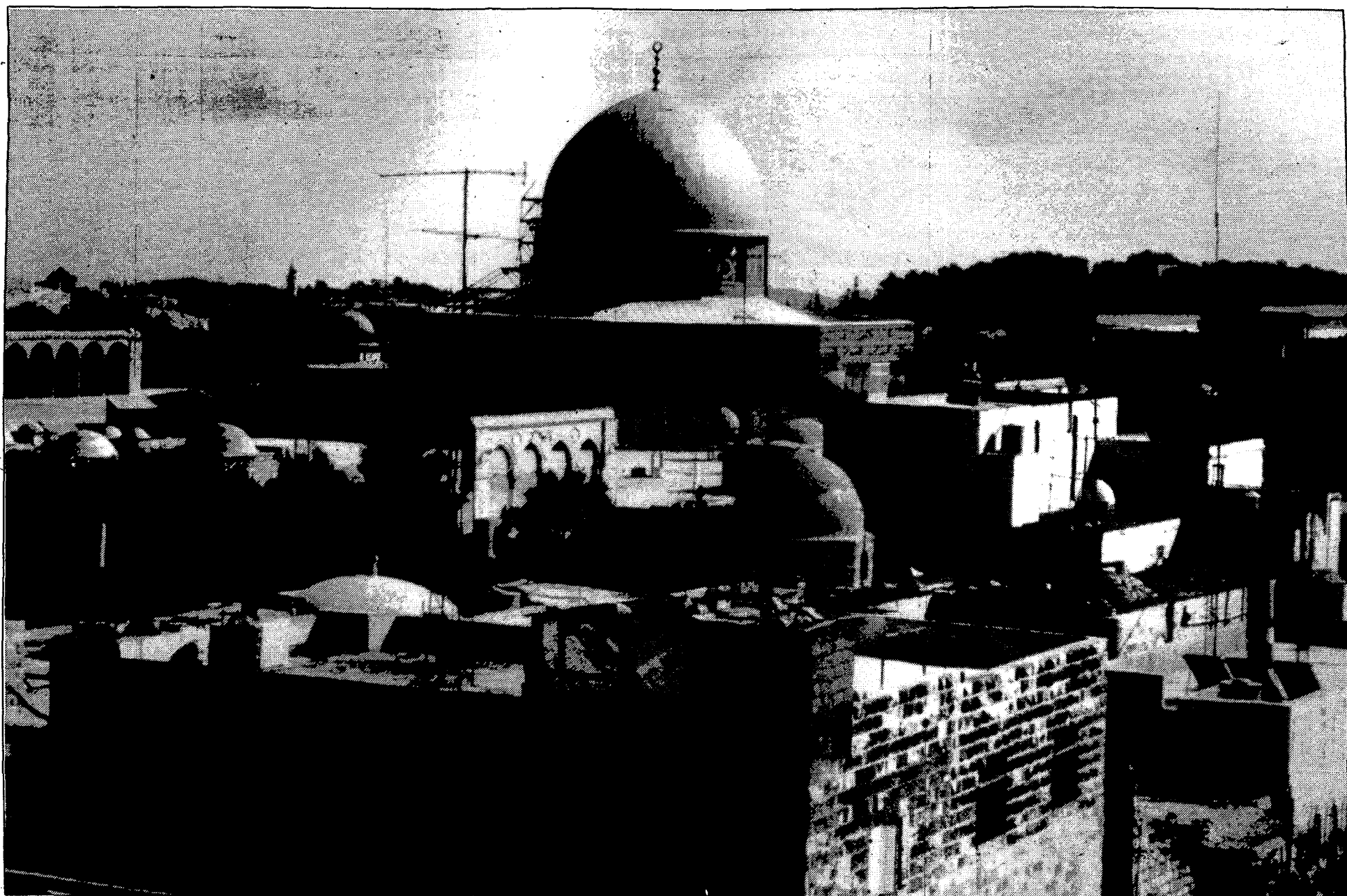
Of course, if the economy goes into a two-year nose dive and if the U.S. is humiliated in the Persian Gulf, then any Democrat who

could look steadily into a TV camera and say, "There you go again," could capture the presidency, but this is not a solution for the Democrats' long-term problems. One need only imagine what would have happened in this election had Dukakis won in 1988: the budget would have been even more of a mess, and the Democrats would be blamed for it and the recession. We might be contemplating the first Republican Congress since 1952.

But Dukakis didn't win, and, absent disaster in the next two years, American politics will probably remain stalemated until 1996 between a Republican White House and a Democratic Congress, as both parties stumble in the darkness. As the world turns, the parties still stay in the same place, fighting battles of 1978 in 1990.

It is probably no accident that voter turnout in 1986 and 1990 was the lowest since the election of 1926—a memorable contest that on the eve of world depression was fought over whether booze should be legalized. Who remembers that election or the presidential election that preceded it? And who in several decades will remember this one? □

IN THESE TIMES NOV. 14-20, 1990 11



Michael Emery

Sects, lies and videotape

What really happened during the Temple Mount massacre

By Michael Emery

JERUSALEM

WHEN 17 PALESTINIANS WERE KILLED and 150 wounded on October 8 by Israeli Border Police on the grounds of Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock, it was widely assumed that the Israeli "over-reaction" was precipitated by the stoning of Jews worshipping below at the Wailing Wall.

But a detailed comparison of media coverage from October 9 to November 5 with numerous pieces of public and private evidence—including three videotapes of the area during the massacre—produces a picture disturbingly different from the one provided by the major American news outlets and by Israeli officials.

Contrary to common belief, a huge number of Palestinians did not initiate the violence by deliberately positioning themselves behind the Western Wall of the compound and hurling rocks at thousands of Jews praying on the other side of the wall. The hail of stones shown repeatedly on TV newscasts and thereafter cited by a legion of Israeli advocates actually filled the sky long after Jewish worshippers had left the Wailing Wall plaza. Those stones, aimed at police, came from Palestinians brought to the height of rage several minutes before during a violent battle with Border Police inside the walled compound.

Before the widely cited barrage, at least four and perhaps as many as seven Palesti-

nians had been fatally shot inside and scores wounded in what may have been the most fiercely fought minutes of the intifada.

There is a ringing importance to the time and place of the shootings. The deaths did not occur in an isolated Gaza refugee camp. They happened on Old City grounds considered holy by both Arabs and Jews.

To Arabs, the area is known as Haram Al-Sharif, or "Noble Sanctuary," and contains the 1,200-year-old Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa mosques. It is the third most holy site in the Moslem world behind Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia.

Jews call it the Temple Mount because the remains of the first two Jewish temples sit below the area. Part of the Western Wall, called the Wailing Wall, is the remaining section of the Second Temple, destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D.

Since 1967, the grounds have been under the supervision of the Waqf Department (Supreme Moslem Council), but Israeli soldiers and police control who enters and leaves the various gates. The entire area is walled in.

The main Jewish ceremony at the Wailing Wall the day of the massacre ended at about 9:30 a.m., and most of the crowd had left by about 10:15 a.m., according to several sources, including the Zamir Commission Report presented to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. It is most likely that the remaining worshippers who suddenly left the

plaza before the main barrage of rocks did so because of the noise, tear gas and gunshots heard from inside—not because they were being hit by stones.

Contrary to most news reports, Israeli police were in general control after the initial stone-throwing and shooting, according to reports by four major Palestinian and Jewish human-rights groups as well as independent sources. This was particularly true when police re-entered the compound. The Palestinians were trapped inside the walled-in area and a number of them died from shots fired at close range, some from only a few meters. There also was sustained sniper fire from several buildings outside of the walls.

Copies of two videotapes, the Mount of Olives and the Wailing Wall tapes, were obtained for this analysis from two sources, who, for matters of personal safety, requested anonymity. These and a portion of a third tape, the Rosen tape—which the *New York Times* described in its October 17 edition—were viewed at the home of Jerusalem businessman Mel Rosen on October 24.

The following chronology also relies on numerous eyewitness accounts and summarizes reports by the Islamic and Zamir Commission of Inquiry. It also includes information reported by the human rights organizations Al-Haq (Law in the Service of Man), B'Tselem (the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories) and the Palestine Human Rights Information Center.

5 a.m.: Moslems gather for the dawn prayer. About 500 have already arrived from West Bank towns and villages as well as from the Jerusalem area. Plans of the Temple Mount Faithful to lay the cornerstone for the Third Jewish Temple have been circulating for days. The Israeli High Court has denied the right-wing religious group access for that purpose, but Palestinians are anxious because the Faithful are scheduled to be in the area. All week Palestinians have been urged to come to defend their holy site.

8 a.m.: Moslems continue to gather in Haram Al-Sharif near the two mosques, Al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock. Jews gather for the Sukkot holiday outside at the Wailing Wall plaza. Tourists are denied entrance. Crowds grow from 10,000 to 20,000 Israelis outside and 2,000 to 5,000 Palestinians inside Haram Al-Sharif.

9:30 a.m.: The main Jewish ceremony ends, and most of the crowd begins to leave. Police tell Gershon Solomon, leader of Temple Mount Faithful, that his group cannot enter the mosque area as planned. Solomon and all of his followers leave for Shiloah Pool in the nearby Palestinian village of Silwan, the scene of many previous disturbances.

10 a.m.: The Koran is broadcast over

mosque loudspeakers. Moslem leaders attempt to calm the crowd, which is anxious because of rumors about the Temple Mount Faithful. Border Police reinforcements take their places inside the Western Wall. Sheik Hamad al-Bitawi gives his last sermon in Al-Aqsa Mosque and then initiates discussion with both regular and Border Police about the need for peace. A Border Police officer makes verbal threats about stone-throwing that are heard by bystanders.

Most Jewish worshipers have left the plaza, but some remain near the Wailing Wall.

Police take up positions on the roof of the Old Justice Building (Mahkameh) between the Moroccan (Magharbeh) and Chain (Al-Silsileh) gates along the Western Wall. Others are stationed on the ground along the inside of the wall. Suddenly, there is a din of noise and confusion inside the Haram Al-Sharif area. Stones are thrown at police. Police shoot tear gas. A gas cannister lands among women near the Dome of the Rock, alarming the men in the lower plaza near Al-Aqsa Mosque whose view of the women is blocked by trees. A loud concussion bomb goes off. Noise drifts in from a street battle in nearby Silwan between the Temple Mount Faithful and Palestinians. Cries from the Silwan mosque can be heard.

About 100 to 200 Palestinians rush toward the police contingent near the Moroccan Gate, and a violent fight begins. Regular police quickly withdraw, leaving a handful of Border Police. Palestinians begin throwing stones from a construction project at police in front of the gate. In an effort to quell the violence, some Palestinians form a human chain between the advancing crowd and the police. At least one police officer is led out with an injury.

Border Police inside the Moroccan Gate open fire into the crowd of advancing Palestinians. Witnesses say three youths are fatally injured—one standing in the human chain with his back to police, one bending over and one rushing toward the scene. Witnesses say another policeman fires an M-16 and fatally injures a fourth youth.

At about this point, an unidentified amateur cameraman begins filming from a roof in the Jewish Quarter, southwest of the Moroccan Gate. The cameraman has a clear view of the Wailing Wall plaza, but his view of the action inside the compound is blocked by the huge Western Wall. This tape will be called the "Wailing Wall tape." It runs for eight minutes, 13 seconds. The sound of the initial burst of gunfire is clearly audible on this tape.

A few moments later, Darrin Glassman, an American tourist and friend of prominent Old City resident Mel Rosen, begins filming the same area from a nearby roof. He has the same view as the first cameraman. This tape, which does not run continuously, will be called the "Rosen tape."

Three minutes later, another unknown cameraman begins filming from the Mount of Olives, high above the Old City to the east. This 29-minute tape captures much of the action inside the complex, although the Western Wall area is blocked by the Al-Aqsa Mosque and trees. This tape will

be called the "Mount of Olives tape."

Both the Wailing Wall tape and the Rosen tape show the police withdrawing through the Moroccan Gate. The enraged Palestinians, knowing people have been shot, rush forward to slam the gate shut.

At about this point, a sheik yells over the loudspeaker: "Move inside the mosques.... Al-Haram is a place for worship, not for fighting.... There are dead and wounded.... Call the police to speak to us.... A massacre is taking place.... It is enough.... Stop the shooting." A translation from the Mount of Olives tape of the cries during the shooting reveals repeated pleas for assistance, for the Palestinians to move inside and for the shooting to stop.

Palestinians throw construction materials and stones in a barrage that lasts about five minutes. This is apparently the first time rocks thrown from behind the wall have reached the plaza. The wall is about 20 feet high and several yards thick. The Wailing Wall tape shows the stones coming from where the Palestinians were massed near the Moroccan Gate. Three large pieces of construction material hit the top of the wall and fall over. The intensity of the rock-throwing surprises the Wailing Wall cameraman, whose exclamation

are clearly audible on the tape. (U.S. network news tapes repeatedly showed rocks flying over the top of the wall but failed to show them landing in the empty plaza below.)

The plaza has been empty for about 30 minutes. The Rosen tape and the network news tapes show several Israeli women escaping from a hiding place in the women's area of the Wailing Wall plaza.

Border Police hunker down inside the Old Justice Building and open fire with live ammunition from several windows. Witnesses say police also shot through a hole in the Moroccan Gate. Gunfire is heard on the Mount of Olives tape.

Some of the gunfire seems to be coming from the north end of the Haram area, where several hundred Palestinians are attacking a small police building. Police become alarmed about the fate of two Arabs—a policeman and a janitor—trapped inside the building. Both are rescued by members of the Islamic Trust (Waqf) before the structure is burned. Israeli snipers, who have positioned themselves on roofs in the Jewish Quarter and on buildings north of the compound, wound scores of Palestinians. According to eyewitnesses, three Palestinians are fatally wounded from one burst of automatic fire on the western side below the

Dome of the Rock. The Mount of Olives tape contains several clear bursts of automatic fire. Witnesses say stones are thrown from the east end of Al-Aqsa onto cars and tour buses below. This does not appear on any available tape.

This is what both Israeli and Arab observers call the "lull period." The Wailing Wall tape and the Rosen tape show police reorganizing along the base of the walkway outside the Moroccan Gate. They had been driven away when the Palestinians threw a tear-gas canister back over the wall. The hail of stones begins to taper off. Shots continue from the Old Justice Building. The Wailing Wall tape cuts off here. Shots can be heard on the Mount of Olives tape. Although this is the "lull period," the Mount of Olives tape shows continuous activity—Palestinians milling around, the arrival of the first rescue vehicles and continued tear-gassing.

About 100 Border Police storm through the Chain and Moroccan gates. More enter through the Lions' Gate to the north. (Israeli officials subsequently used the attack on the small police building as a pretext for this assault.) The Mount of Olives tape shows Palestinians being trapped inside the compound. Many run toward the front doors of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Bursts of automatic fire can be heard along with continuous single shots, some of them from snipers. A few minutes later, the Mount of Olives tape ends as the first Border Police approach the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

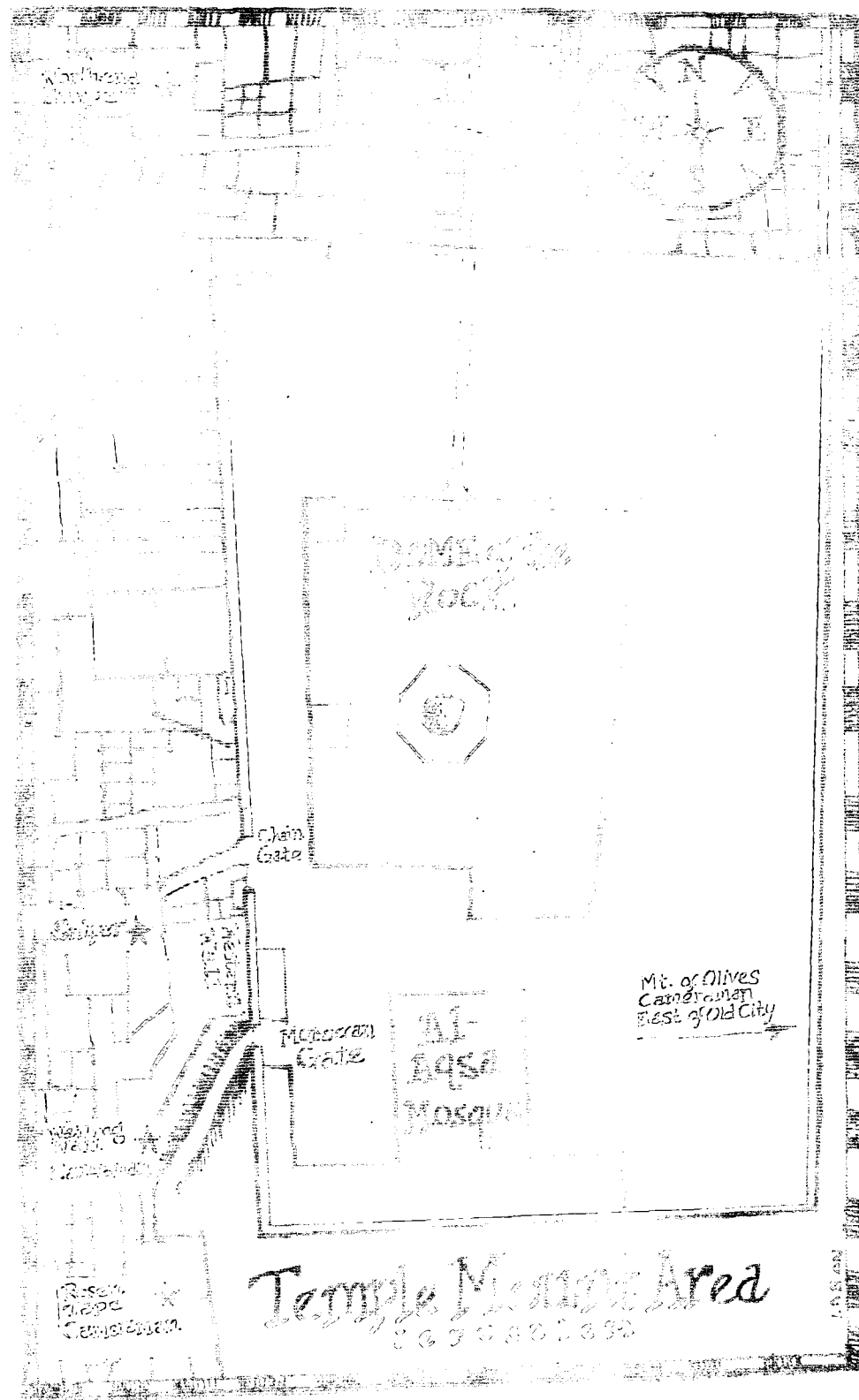
The shooting tapers off. At least another 10 Palestinians are dead and dozens more wounded.

The final total—revised from 21 dead—is 17 dead and at least 150 wounded. A 24-year-old was shot dead by an Israeli citizen a few blocks from the compound near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Several hundred others suffer from beatings and tear-gas attacks, including one attack in which gas was inexplicably shot inside Al-Aqsa at about 11:30 a.m., after Israeli police gained control. Some 1,100 Palestinians begin to emerge from the Al-Aqsa Mosque and several hundred more from the Dome of the Rock. Police arrest 140, including Faisal Husseini, a noted Palestinian leader who is detained for one week along with a number of others who are arrested. Sporadic shooting continues; Palestinians gather around Makas-sad and Augusta Victoria hospitals on the Mount of Olives, where the dead and wounded are being taken. Israelis use tear gas to clear the streets.

The last of the wounded are taken away by ambulances. Reporters verify stories about two nurses shot trying to help victims, drivers of vehicles treated roughly when entering the mosque area, wounded being beaten by Border Police, some persons shot in the back while fleeing or while cradling the injured, and Border Police walking from the Haram area saying to one another, "We fucked the Arabs today!"

Michael Emery is professor of journalism at California State University, Northridge. He has traveled extensively in the Middle East and is co-author of *The Press and America*.

IN THESE TIMES NOV. 14-20, 1990 13



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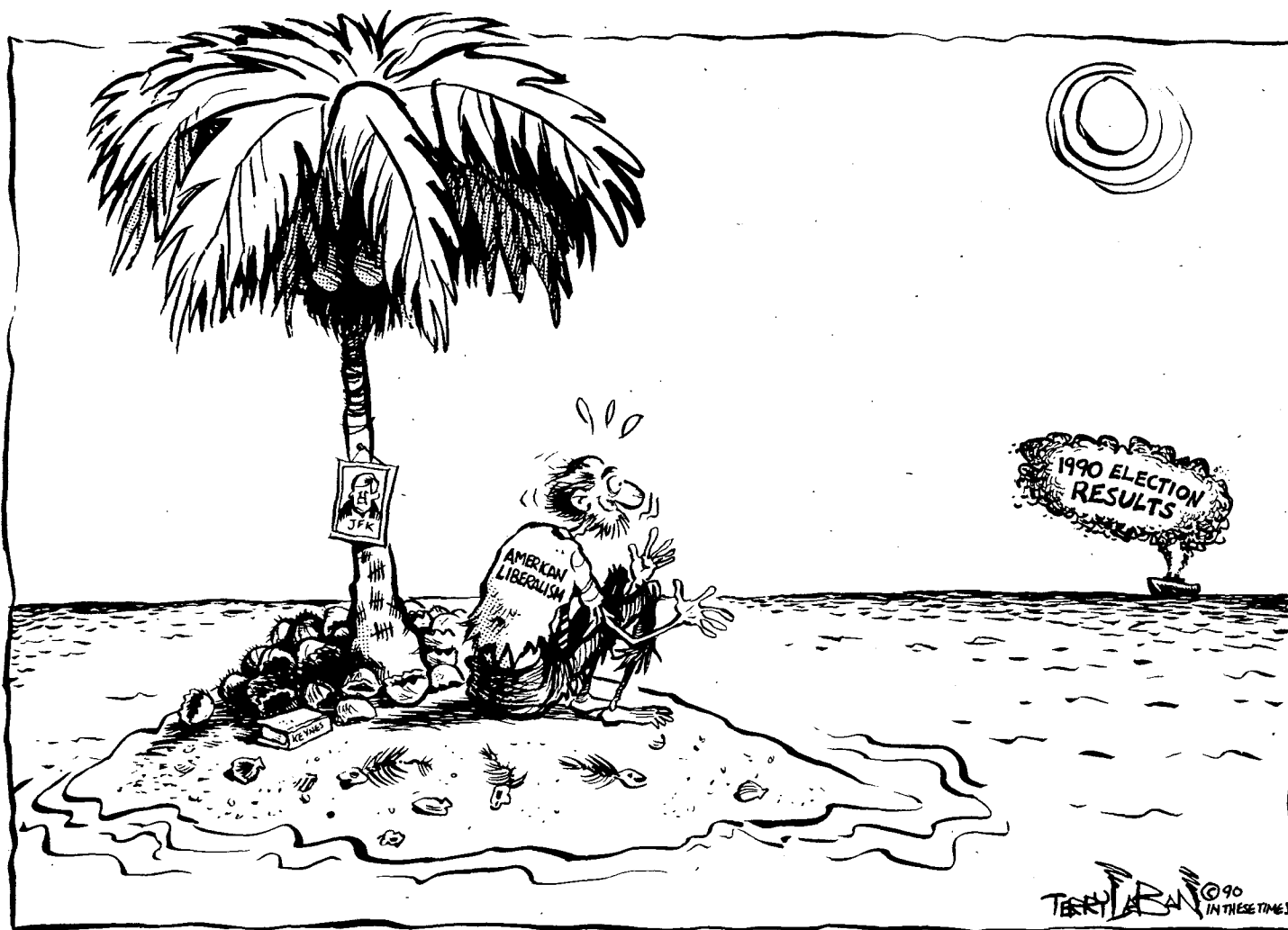
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While party leaders fiddle, two left candidates smoke

On the surface, the 1990 elections appear to have accomplished little. The Democrats suffered a net loss of one statehouse but enjoyed a net gain of eight House seats and one Senate seat, bringing their majority in the House to 100 and in the Senate to 12. The bloodbath of incumbents predicted by some pundits didn't happen, and no clear national trends emerged. Most changes were on the state level, with voters taking out their frustrations on governors who have been under pressure as the result of 10 years of cuts in federal aid. But the net result was a virtual wash. Republicans beat incumbent Democrats in Ohio, Michigan and Minnesota, and Democrats beat Republicans in Florida, Texas and Kansas. The TV pundits didn't know what to make of all this, settling either for the profound observation that all politics are local or that what people wanted were "fresh faces."

The results were consistent with our expectations. We wrote last week (see "Viewpoint," Nov. 7) that because throwing out current officeholders would result only in the election of new ones equally beholden to the wealthy elite, the anger and disgust that Americans feel toward both major parties was unlikely to lead to a mass rejection of incumbents. Instead, we predicted, many people simply would not vote. And that's how it turned out. The incumbents won, but only about one-third of the people eligible to do so bothered to cast ballots. In many places voter turnout hit new lows.

That's the bad news. The good news is that in the three main races where there were clear alternatives, public interest was greater than in other states, and two of three left candidates won, while the third gave the entrenched conservative an unexpectedly strong challenge.

In Vermont, running as an independent socialist against an incumbent Republican and a token Democrat, Bernie Sanders was decisively elected to the House. In Minnesota, running as a Democrat against a Republican incumbent whose seat was considered safe, Paul Wellstone edged out Rudy Boschwitz to win election to the Senate. And in North Carolina, Harvey Gantt came amazingly close

to beating right-wing icon Sen. Jesse Helms in what all the experts initially believed was a futile exercise.

In these races the alternatives were clear. Sanders, Wellstone and Gantt all called for a change in our national priorities: cuts in military spending, increased resources and attention to social needs such as health care, education, housing and environmental protection. Their campaigns also emphasized citizen participation and—in Sanders' and Wellstone's cases—relied less on TV than the pundits now tell us is an absolute necessity. Wellstone, for example, spent only \$.93 per vote, while Boschwitz spent \$6.87.

These candidates differed from other politicians in another important respect. They have long been committed to the principles they espouse. Their views were not chosen by studying polls or asking consultants what would sell today. But their campaign issues were also big sellers for at least one traditional politician who invested heavily in them. In Illinois, Sen. Paul Simon, a man not known for courageous adherence to left or liberal issues, called for deep cuts in military spending and for higher income taxes on the wealthy. And he portrayed himself as a defender of Social Security, education, the environment, health care and civil rights. The result: Simon beat Bush loyalist Lynn Martin by two-to-one, a record victory margin for a Senate race in Illinois.

Grass-roots campaigning also succeeded in Florida, where former Senator Lawton Chiles, a man of no particular principles, ran a campaign in which he refused to accept contributions of more than \$100, downplayed TV and stomped throughout the state talking like a populist directly to voters. Instead of raising money from special corporate interests, Chiles got 75,000 people to give an average of \$70 each, for a total of about \$5 million. This totaled less than half the amount raised by incumbent Republican Bob Martinez, but it involved many more voters in his campaign. And Chiles won easily.

These campaigns, each in their own way, belie the advice of the Democratic Leadership Council and professional consultants, who insist that to win Democrats must raise vast sums of money and mimic Republicans, especially on taxes, military spending and bellicose foreign policy. The results in Minnesota, Vermont and Illinois indicate that voters will support a clear left alternative. And the results prove that professional consultants and big bucks are less important than speaking the truth and defending the interests of working Americans.

LETTERS

They did it on Perpich

ADAM PLATT'S REPORT ON MINNESOTA POLITICS (*ITT*, Oct. 31) overlooks an interesting and, I think, important angle on the governorship. The Republican powers that be were not interested in this contest. That is why they permitted the nomination of a candidate who was vulnerable. They knew Jon Gruneth could be attacked on the irrelevant issue of his sexual conduct. But they were perfectly satisfied with the incumbent Democratic Farmer-Labor (DFL) governor whose anti-labor, soak-the-poor record pleased them. DFL voters were not pleased, and there was a considerable no-vote campaign going on.

As this is written, we don't know the election outcome. Gruneth has withdrawn, and his primary opponent now has the party endorsement. He will undoubtedly get some DFL votes because of Perpich's reactionary stand and record.

Frederick S. Gram
St. Paul, Minn.

Totem attack

IN "BLACKS, JEWS AND THE FOLKLORE OF OPPRESSION" ("Viewpoint," Oct. 10) Nan Elsasser makes some interesting and valid points of comparison between the defensive attitudes of African-Americans on the subject of Washington, D.C., Mayor Marion Barry and those of American Jews on the subject of Israel. The need to tailor one's public posture according to a perceived attack on one's totems is as universal as it is regrettable.

There is, however, one important difference that she did not touch on: the political and media establishments in the U.S. are hardly as favorable to Barry as they are to Israel. There are no major columnists talking about the "reverse reality" of American supporters of Israel. Principled black critics of Barry are welcomed in the white media, far from being marginalized in low-circulation journals and publishers as is, for example, Noam Chomsky, who in *The Fateful Triangle* and *Necessary Illusions* has convincingly demonstrated the pro-Israel bias of the mainstream media. There is also no evidence that Jonathan Pollard or any other Israeli spy has been the object of entrapment. And Congress does not routinely vote without discussion to give almost \$4 billion dollars—more than \$10 million dollars a day—to Barry's constituents, as it does for Israel.

So the political and media contexts for the defensiveness of the two groups stand in marked contrast to each other. When American Jews close ranks on the subject of Israel, it is with the tacit support of the establishment. That is hardly the case for African-Americans on the subject of Marion Barry.

Jeffrey Larson
Hamden, Ct.

Junk stoppers

WOODY IGOU WAS RIGHT ON TRACK WITH HIS assertion that citizens should have veto power over unsolicited mailings entering our postal boxes (*ITT*, Oct. 31).

One framework is already in place to assist those who want their names removed from mailing lists. The Direct Mailing Association's Mail Preference Service can see

that your name is flagged and removed from bulk mailings. The service is free. Write 6 East 43 Street, New York, NY 10017, or call (212) 689-4977. According to Alyssa Burger's news brief in the March 1990 edition of *E Magazine*, this can reduce new pieces of junk mail coming to your address by up to 75 percent.

Another avenue to pursue is contacting the direct mailers you currently do business with, in writing, and requesting that your name not be sold or traded on their lists. I have found this route quite effective in clearing the mail-box congestion at my home.

Pamela Snyder
Austin, Texas

Solidarity

CHRIS BEDFORD SUGGESTS IN HIS ARTICLE ON Project Solidarity (*ITT*, Oct. 24) that local union participants were at odds with the United Paperworkers International Union (UPIU). In fact, President Wayne Glenn has supported the effort from the very beginning. UPIU has battles with Stone Container, Georgia Pacific and several other paper companies in which a variety of approaches to bring justice to the members are being employed.

Project Solidarity is one approach. Locals pay the costs and direct the efforts of my staff. We now have 31 participants in the coordinated bargaining pool, and our goal is 40 by the end of the year. Paperworkers in Project Solidarity are also working with the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and the International Association of Machinists. Our belief is that all workers, whatever their

international union, must stand together against one of the worst corporate outlaws in America—International Paper (IP).

IP, by the way, is America's second-largest customer with South Africa. On the board of directors sit Sam Pierce, who may be indicted soon for his role with the Department of Housing and Urban Development; and Roger Smith, the star of *Roger and Me*. Is there any wonder why IP continues in its efforts to crush the union, pollute the air and water and disregard the interests of the communities in which it is located?

Ed Garvey
Coordinator
Project Solidarity

Education shell game

ICERTAINLY HAVE NO QUARREL WITH THE MAIN thrust of David Moberg's article on the Illinois governor's race (*ITT*, Oct. 24). Any progressive positions taken by Democrat Neil Hartigan are probably accidental. Yet, just as blind hogs find an acorn now and then, Hartigan is basically correct on his tax issue and progressives should give it closer attention.

The seeming anomaly of a Democrat opposing and a Republican supporting an education tax is not so surprising when you look beneath the surface. State lottery profits for a decade and 50 percent of last year's income-tax surcharge have technically gone for education in the Common School Fund, but it is purely an accounting maneuver. No extra money actually goes to education under current practices.

The state legislature sets the education budget regardless of the amount of money in the fund. Any part of the education budget not covered by the Common School Fund comes from the state's general revenue, so additional revenue sources for education serve only to free up money that can go for other purposes without having to raise taxes further. Under Republican Gov. Jim Thompson, the additional money has gone to finance services and public construction in Republican areas such as DuPage County, with a share for Chicago Democratic leaders.

Meanwhile, state support for education has actually decreased. State funding in Illinois dropped since 1977 from 44 percent to 39 percent, with the national average at 50 percent. Most of the rest comes from increased local taxes, helping to feed the property-tax revolt.

This explains the seeming anomaly of the Republican gubernatorial candidate supporting a tax and the Democrat opposing it. Edgar needs the surcharge to pay off his supporters. It would be political suicide for him to campaign for a tax to help specific suburban counties, but he can support an "education surcharge" that will free up money to do just that. Likewise, Hartigan has nothing to lose by opposing it. It's been 14 dry years for Illinois Democrats, and there will be more state money available for his supporters than they've seen for some time, even if the surcharge gets repealed. Neither candidate is interested in education for Illinois children.

Loomis Mayfield
Malta, Ill.

SYLVIA

Nostalgia Quiz
How well do you remember the Reagan Administration?

RONALD REAGAN... WASN'T HE THE HOST OF A.T.V. SHOW FOR KIDS? WEARS AN OLD CARDIGAN SWEATER, HAS A FUNNY VOICE?

I THINK THAT'S MEL TORME.

WHAT WAS THE ECONOMIC THEORY THAT PROMISED THAT TAX BREAKS FOR THE RICH WOULD EVENTUALLY BENEFIT EVERYONE IN AMERICA?

01. "the Party-Down theory."
02. "the Dribble-Down theory."
03. "the Domino theory."

Rita, this coffee was made during the Civil War, right?

OH, MA, H'S JUST FROM YESTERDAY.

Nicole Hollander

Mishaps in the workplace are no accident

By Dick Meister

IT'S BEEN 20 YEARS SINCE ENACTMENT OF the Occupational Safety and Health Act, yet millions of Americans continue to fall victim to increasing workplace hazards.

Despite the law, the number of Americans killed on the job this year will again reach more than 10,000, as it has every year in recent history. That's an average of at least 30 workers killed every day of every year. And that's only in accidents. Another 100,000 workers die each year from cancer, lung and heart ailments and other diseases resulting from on-the-job exposure to toxic substances.

The number injured on the job exceeds more than 10 million annually. At least 3 million of those workers are seriously hurt—70,000 in ways that disable them permanently. That's a rate of one job injury every six seconds of every working day.

"Deaths, injuries and occupational disease have become a fact of the workplace, the cost of doing business," declared President John Olsen of Connecticut's AFL-CIO. He spoke at memorial services in Bridgeport for 28 workers who were crushed to death in 1987 when a building they were working on collapsed—an accident blamed on design flaws and the absence of legally required safety procedures.

Olsen's comments came during one of



hundreds of "Workers Memorial Day" observances held across the country last year to launch what has become a major AFL-CIO campaign to pressure Congress and President Bush into strengthening and enforcing the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

This year's observances, held April 28, included ceremonies in Pasadena, Texas, where 23 people were killed and 272 injured—many of them severely burned—when a series of explosions rocked a chemical plant last November.

A ceremony in San Francisco honored five workers who died last November when a huge crane toppled from a high-rise building being constructed in the city's financial district. Jack Henning, head of California's AFL-CIO, remarked that "employers are intolerant of safety regulations and codes if these interfere with profits—that's the reality of our economic system."

On Workers Memorial Day in New York, Mayor David Dinkins ordered flags on city buildings flown at half-staff to honor workers killed on the job. During a memorial service near Gramercy Park, Dinkins remembered James Byrnes, a Transit Authority employee who was killed while working on a section of track in Queens last November.

Byrnes' 15 brothers and sisters attended the ceremony. His brother Patrick said James died following an order to work on a section of track that supervisors knew was unsafe. "My brother's death was avoidable," Patrick asserted. "We as his family want to make sure he did not die in vain. We declare war on death in the workplace."

A promise not kept: When Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act in 1970, it provided the machinery for creating and enforcing the nation's first comprehensive health and safety standards and regulations. For the first time, Congress placed government's regulatory emphasis on preventing accidents and illnesses, not merely on remedying conditions after workers had been hurt or made ill.

But the law has never come close to realizing its great promise. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA),

done. The AFL-CIO wants the government to require creation of programs at all work sites to train workers in health and safety matters, as is done in Canada and Europe. It wants labor-management committees set up that would oversee safety programs and have authority to investigate accidents and shut down hazardous operations. The AFL-CIO also wants workers to have the absolute right to refuse unusually dangerous work and to complain of unsafe conditions without fear of employer retaliation.

But giving workers a strong voice is just one of many urgent needs. More money is needed to fund safety research programs. And OSHA must establish better accident-reporting procedures so workers can more accurately measure the hazards they face.

There's also a crucial need to increase substantially the fines and other penalties imposed on employers for violating the safety act. Currently, penalties don't even exist for some of the most dangerous practices in many high-risk occupations. The government has been slow to acknowledge the dangers video-display terminals pose to data processors, and OSHA has done little to prevent the repetitive-motion injuries devastating poultry-processing workers and others.

In the health-care industry, workers need much greater protection from infectious diseases, and they and many other workers need relief from chemicals that can cause reproductive damage and other critical health problems. Bill Robertson, secretary-treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, notes, for instance, the lack of effective control over "killer chemicals, which enter the workplace at the rate of 1,500 new compounds a year."

Out of the loop: At the moment, protection is nearly non-existent for an increasing number of immigrant workers, who generally know little about the law and dare not complain of unsafe conditions for fear of being fired. In addition, there are 40 million workers who are not even covered by the safety act. Loopholes in the 1970 law exclude state and local government workers in 25 states from protection by federal guidelines. The law also excludes farmworkers, whose occupation is the country's most dangerous—one in which 1,500 workers a year are killed, more than one-fifth of them children.

Although the Bush administration recently agreed to support an AFL-CIO-backed bill that would triple fines for employers violating the safety act, Congress tabled some of the most promising amendments to the act. Killed in committee were bills that would have protected whistleblowers from their employers and strengthened OSHA's hand with the construction industry—which is responsible for more on-the-job fatalities than any other U.S. industry.

"We die one at a time without being noticed," says William Lucy of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, "but we are determined not to be invisible anymore."

©1990 Dick Meister

Dick Meister, a San Francisco writer, has covered labor for three decades as a reporter, editor, broadcaster and commentator. He is co-author of *A Long Time Coming: The Struggle to Unionize America's Farm Workers* (Macmillan).

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U.S. plans to destroy Iraq's media links

If the U.S. does launch an attack against Iraq, don't expect to get live CNN reports from Baghdad. A White House staffer privy to war plans recently confided to one foreign journalist that among the first targets of U.S. bombers over Baghdad would be the satellite uplinks, thus diminishing, or at least delaying, the transmission of disturbing pictures of carnage wrought by the bombing and also impeding the Iraqi leadership from making any direct statements to the outside world.

The disclosure suggests a couple of things: one, that detailed "decapitation" plans—of the sort that Air Force Gen. Michael J. Dugan got fired for disclosing—are still being laid; two, that the White House and Pentagon would make every effort, as in Panama, to restrict information and coverage of the large-scale destruction and death that war with Iraq would produce.

In the past few weeks, every pronouncement of President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker had to be set against the backdrop of last Tuesday's mid-term elections. In tune with the requirements of each campaign stop, the president rattled his saber or invoked his hopes for a peaceful settlement.

But now, with the elections over, what are the likely scenarios for resolution of the Gulf crisis? From Saddam Hussein's viewpoint, the situation has shown steady improvement since the days immediately following his August 2 invasion of Kuwait, when it seemed quite possible that the U.S. would launch an immediate attack.

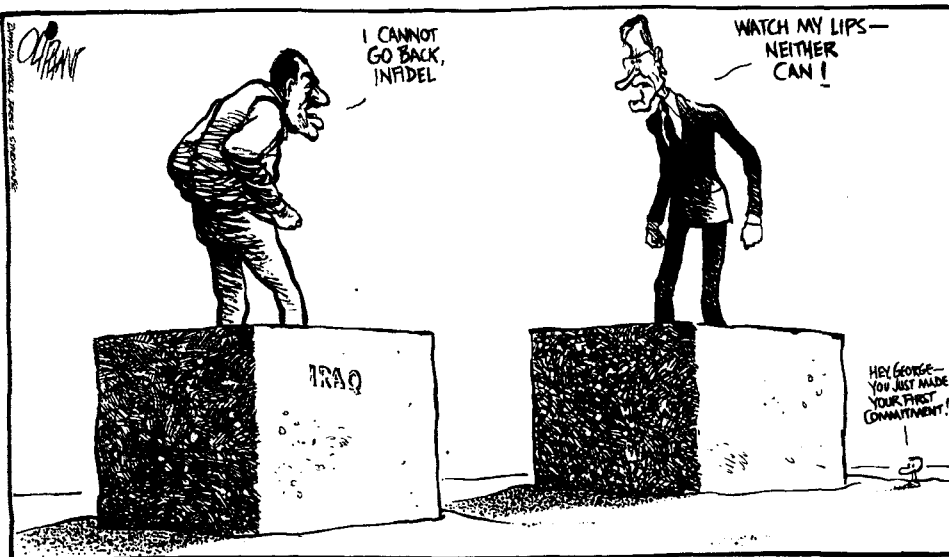
The international unity of policy and purpose is beginning to erode and the seizure of hostages showing useful results, as streams of international figures such as Britain's Edward Heath or Japan's Yasuhiro Nakasone arrive in Baghdad to plead for the release of their nationals. Gorbachov's personal envoy, Yevgeny Primakov, gives mixed signals and Gorbachev himself, in Paris at Mitterand's side, announces that the military option—an attack on Iraq to force it out of Kuwait—is virtually unthinkable. Although a week later Primakov said that Gorbachov had been mistranslated and that force might be ultimately necessary under U.N. auspices, it's clear that the Soviet leader is still strongly in the camp calling for a negotiated settlement.

Recruits to Bush's initial drive for sanctions are beginning to waver, or at least insist at increasing volume that they will be no party to anything beyond the trade embargo imposed by the U.N. Security Council. Only Margaret Thatcher (the UK's economy has been boosted by soaring North Sea oil prices) gives vociferous support to Secretary of State Baker's position that Article 51 of the U.N. Charter (permitting emergency unilateral action to counter invasion prior to collective U.N. decisions) renders it unnecessary for the U.S. to get the go-ahead from the Security Council to launch a military attack.

Under growing internal pressure, Turkey's President Turgut Uzal is emphasizing that his country does not see itself as the launch point for a second front against Iraq from the north. Syria, having taken advantage of the rapprochement with the U.S. to wipe out Gen. Michel Aoun's Christian militia in Lebanon, is now signaling its displeasure at what it sees as destabilizing U.S.

ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn



deliveries to Israel of Patriot missiles, adding that Bush's reaction to the massacre of 21 Palestinians near the Dome of the Rock was disgracefully feeble.

A few days later, amid suspicions of a quick dose of Saudi aid to brace Syria's resolve, Syrian Information Minister Mohammed Salman announced that Syria was committed to sending troops to the Gulf and would send further troops. But the hot/cold rhetoric of the Syrian leadership suggests its ambivalent attitude toward the coalition. There are signs that other Arab nations may be inclining toward the same view, despite the initial furious roars from Egypt and Saudi Arabia that Saddam and his entire apparatus had to be extirpated.

Not only would a devastated Iraq leave Israel with enhanced power, it would also leave Iran as a potentially aggressive power threatening from the east, just as it has done for the past 2,500 years. And despite Turkey's recent insistence that trade sanctions (which are costing it dearly) represent the furthest extent of its commitment, Arabs and Egyptians do not need to go back more than 75 years to remember when they were vassals of the Ottoman Empire. Do they really want Turkey seizing Mosul as one of the prizes of the war against Iraq?

So Saddam can view these developments with satisfaction, just as he exulted when the Israeli slaughter in the Old City tested

Not only would a devastated Iraq leave Israel with enhanced power, it would leave Iran as a potentially aggressive power just as it has been for the past 2,500 years.

the U.S.-Arab coalition at its weakest point and when the third-ranking member of the Saudi royal family said that, in the event of a withdrawal from Kuwait, his "Iraqi brothers" might well expect to get decent access to the Gulf. The Saudi prince, who later made a rather unconvincing retraction, was thus suggesting that Kuwait should prepare itself to give up Bubiyan and Warbah islands, giving Iraq one of its prime objectives in the invasion.

The U.S. government's disquiet is commensurate with Saddam's satisfaction. As everyone predicted at the start, it is hard

to hold together such an inherently unstable coalition for very long. The only thing that can be pointed to with some gratification is that the U.N. sanctions are having an effect. Though Saddam sacked his oil minister for imposing rationing of gasoline and diesel fuel, consumption of these fuels will still have to be curtailed because of the shortage of additives needed to produce them.

One commonly heard estimate is that sanctions will really start paralyzing Iraq's economy no earlier than next February. A report by the Economist Intelligence Unit in London said that despite such hardship "in two crucial aspects—food and fuel—Iraq and [Iraqi-occupied] Kuwait can survive for a number of months, perhaps until the end of March, 1991."

The rational path for the Bush government to pursue is the sustaining of sanc-

tions and, in parallel, exploration of all avenues to a negotiated settlement of the kind hinted at by the Soviets and the French. But, by his own repeated and foolish public assertions that "no compromise" is possible on full Iraqi withdrawal, restoration of the emir, etc., Bush has seriously limited his capacity to maneuver.

Bush also faces renewed assault from the powerful Israel lobby in the U.S., which sees nothing but danger in any negotiated settlement that leaves Saddam in place and his military forces not substantially depleted. The president is also vulnerable to charges from such conservatives as William Buckley that, having committed more than 200,000 men and women to the Gulf, it would be an unacceptable defeat for the U.S. to withdraw them without the overthrow of Saddam.

Against such considerations are increasingly realistic estimates of the appalling cost of any war in lives and money and the regional power balance. There is already a burgeoning peace movement in the United States and certainly no national consensus for war.

So uncompromising maintenance of sanctions, intimations that withdrawal by Iraq would bring satisfaction in terms of Gulf access and the Rumailah oil field and a conference on other territorial issues in the region would ultimately force Saddam's withdrawal, though he would bluff it out to the end. But there's no conclusive evidence from his political biography that the president has the tenacity and flexibility to pursue this course. War, like Roloids, would bring him quick, if temporary, relief, even though the ailing economy would buckle under \$100-a-barrel oil. The task of the peace movement should be to force him to the former option.

Distributed by Alexander Cockburn

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Prosperity Lost

By Philip Mattera
Addison-Wesley, 247 pp., \$19.95

By Hardy Green

ARE AMERICANS IN A TRANCE? We all know that the '80s were a time when the rich got super-rich and the poor got ketchup as a vegetable. But Philip Mattera's *Prosperity Lost* will leave you appalled at the dimensions of the destruction of "middle class" living standards—and marveling at the absence of political aftershocks.

Despite the presence of the country's longest peacetime economic expansion, the '80s were characterized by a "quiet erosion of living standards for all but the wealthiest parts of the population." And looking closely at changes in income and in the availability of housing, health care and education, Mattera makes a solid case that "the basic elements of the good life ... seem increasingly out of reach" for all but the privileged.

Prosperity Lost provides a wealth of statistical detail. The author demonstrates how the median family income doubled between the '40s and the '70s then came to a standstill, even though families increased their number of workers and hours worked. Census figures show the distribution of income moving ever-so-slightly in the direction of equality between the '40s and '60s then suddenly switching into reverse in the '70s and '80s, when the bottom 80 percent of the population saw wealth transferred to the top 20 percent. And we're shown how the share of total net assets held by the "super-rich" rose from 15 percent in 1976 to more than 35 percent in 1983.

Numbing numbers: In the '80s, for the first time in post-war history, the rate of homeownership declined. Higher education costs rose by 50 percent in private colleges and 33 percent in public universities. Forty percent of U.S. workers found themselves with no health insurance. And poverty soared among female-headed households.

Such changes, says Mattera, were effected by a combination of federal-government policy, industrial restructuring and a corporate assault against the union wage.

The government got in its licks in the '70s, when the Nixon administration responded to the demands of minorities, welfare-rights organizations, workers and students with an engineered dose of hard times. Nonetheless, consumer advocacy resulted in a wave of legislation—including regulation of meat inspection, motor vehicles, child protection, truth in lending, environmental protection and occupational safety and health. And that spurred a new business offensive led by the Business Roundtable and a number of corporate think tanks and legal funds. Then, in what the author calls

"an unprecedented alliance of business, the federal government and the right," the assault on middle-income Americans began in earnest under Ronald Reagan.

Mattera calls this a "coup"—though I'm not sure why, given that federal government has long been of, by and for the ruling class. (Some Reagan veterans refer to their accomplishments as a "revolution"—equally dramatic but unjustified language, since, as Mattera shows, politics and corporate policy were already headed in a rightward direction.) We could stand to have more historical perspective on and analysis of this escalation of pro-rich, pro-corporate policy.

But whatever it's called, the Reagan policies had a calamitous impact on most Americans. A populist discontent with taxes was employed to assail and all but abolish progressive taxation. A range of "safety net" programs came under the knife—including Social Security, black-lung compensation, unemployment insurance, disability benefits, food stamps, child-nutrition programs, energy and housing subsidies and Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Meanwhile, the military banqueted. The lowest one-fifth of U.S. families on the income ladder saw their income drop 9 percent, while the top one-fifth gained 19 percent.

Disposable labor: Plant closings led to the loss of 10 million jobs between 1983 and 1988. The entire manufacturing sector was in a bewildering process of shrinkage, restructuring, transfer to foreign ownership and outright dismantlement. At the same time, the "Great American Jobs Machine" was churning out inferior service jobs to take the place of the

lost, superior manufacturing jobs.

Today, more and more of the available jobs are part time, temporary or freelance, paying low wages

WEALTH

and offering little security. (Mattera shows this to be true whether one considers university teaching, industrial production or clerical work.) Businesses now treat labor as a disposable asset.

And no union organizer needs to be reminded of the '80s rise of an anti-union-consultant industry, corporate demands for givebacks and multiple broken strikes in which the state operated as capital's highly conspicuous collaborator. Less obvious are the 200,000 unionized workers who, in the past decade, became non-union as a result of management-orchestrated decertification elections.

The author spices up this statistical potpourri with tales of the real world drawn from diverse sources, including congressional testimony and Mattera's own writing for the Paperworkers' union newspaper. In addition to giving us stories of those who've suffered, he reminds us of the repeated, flagrant taunts of the corporate and political elite. Bush

The basic elements of the good life seem increasingly out of reach for most people.

administration Budget Director Richard Darman likens the U.S. public to a "spoiled child" in need of a dose of sacrifice. Here, too, is the unlamented Reagan himself, declaring that the "minimum wage has caused more misery and unemployment than anything since the Great Depression," then attempting to pass some of the burden of reduced living standards on to teenagers in the form of a youth subminimum wage.

Prosperity Lost provides a wish list of cures for these ailments: a maximum wage, or absolute limits on income, accompanied by a guaranteed income for everyone; requirements that contingent workers receive full benefits and equal hourly wages with permanent workers; outlawing the use of permanent replacement workers during strikes, along with sanctions for labor-law violators; comprehensive child care and national health care; limits on the international mobility of capital; the creation of "liberated zones," or non-capitalist spheres of economic and social activity; a genuine ecological cleanup; and more.

Middle-class malaise: These ideas are offered as a tonic to shake Americans out of the "lingering amnesia about class differences" that the author believes "makes it difficult for people to see that the rules of the game have changed." Confused and still conceiving of themselves as middle class, they can't figure out why it now takes two incomes to live less well than their parents lived on one income. But is that all there is to it? Why has there been so little reaction to this avalanche?

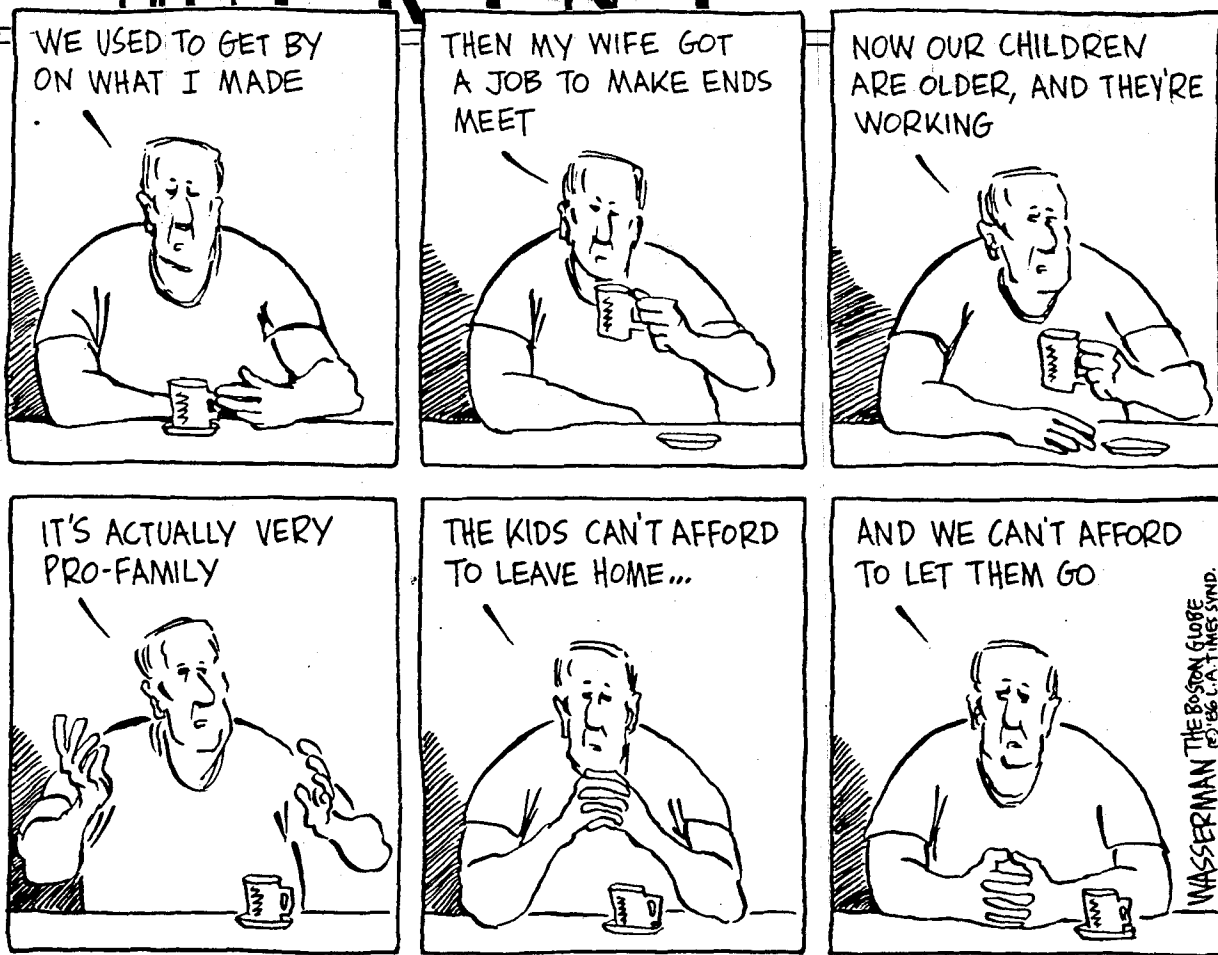
One answer, optimists may suggest, is that there have been reac-

tions, some of them pretty powerful. But whether you're talking about Midwestern farmers resisting farm foreclosure or Phelps Dodge strikers, the outbursts have remained mostly local in scope—and most have been defeated.

Other Americans may be too busy treading water or too personally demoralized to fight back. Mattera tells us about a California defense worker who sleeps in his car several nights a week to avoid the 110-mile round-trip commute between work and the nearest home he and his family can afford. There's the humbled Bill Gorol Jr., a dislocated worker from USX's shut-down Homestead, Pa., plant, whose father thinks he's stupid because today he can find work only in crummy "junk jobs." And there's the divorced California woman whose abrupt descent into poverty left her and her child eating the Safeway supermarket 39-cent special, boxed macaroni and cheese, five nights a week.

But it also seems that the "amnesia" extends beyond the question of class identity. As Studs Terkel and others have noted, Americans have precious little historical memory of anything—including the role played by popular movements in forcing redistribution of income and access to education, health care and housing. Moreover, such has been the collapse of the besieged labor movement—viewed as an anachronism by most young workers—that Mattera's "middle class" people today have virtually no institutions to defend them. ■

Hardy Green is a New York-based writer and author of *On Strike at Hormel*, published by Temple University Press.



Income erosion, economic landslides

**Israeli Cinema: East/West
and the Politics of
Representation**

By Ella Shohat
University of Texas Press
312 pp., \$13.95

Satyajit Ray

By Andrew Robinson
University of California Press
412 pp., \$29.95

By Pat Aufderheide

Glass act: a lens that becomes a window that becomes a mirror

INTERNATIONAL CINEMA HAS LONG been the terra incognita of even the enthusiastic filmgoer. And if it's been hard to see, it's been harder to learn about, especially if the films come from outside the perimeter of the psychologically and financially safe zone of Western Europe. But those who've ventured forth have discovered not only new worlds but sometimes disquieting discoveries about their own.

There's now a small but vigorous movement to expand cinematic and social horizons. The trend seems to follow both current events and intellectual trends. The collapse of the Eastern bloc has brought forth films long languishing on the censored shelf; the capitalist burgeoning of the Pacific Rim—along with the growth of Asian minorities in the U.S.—has made occasional sightings of Asian cinema possible; the maturing and proliferation of film festivals within the U.S., serving regional and ethnic audiences, has brought films from the Middle East, Africa and Latin America to local screens.

Intellectually, the issue that has spurred curiosity about international cinema has been the pursuit of the Other, that mysterious template upon which we expose our own preconceptions and self-images. That pursuit, in turn, has been fed by feminism—discovering in images of women the image of the Other—and by the demands of cultural and racial minorities for a voice of their own. It has liberally—and sometimes obscurely—delved into psychoanalytic and poststructural theories of language and knowledge, groping for ways to describe what has been repressed out of the images that divert and describe us on screen.

Knowledge that once was the preserve of aficionados and filmmakers themselves, and debates that once raged below the surface of formal debate—often surfacing in bureaucratic wranglings at funding institutions—are now garnering intellectual space. Small journals such as *Black Film Review* (2025 Eye St. NW, Washington, DC 20006) and *Asian Cinema* (Quinnipiac College, Box 91, Hamden, CT 06518) offer reports and reviews and raise contentious aesthetic issues. Roy Armes' superbly synthetic text *Third World Film Making and the West* (University of California, 1987) provides a road map for the novice and a reference text for the scholar. Jim Pines and Paul Willems' *Questions of Third Cinema* (British Film Institute/University of Indiana Press) raises basic

aesthetic questions—how do we judge films made for and by peoples whose entire experience lies within the pale of Hollywood's Other?—for sites as diverse as India, Africa and the British and American cultures of the black diaspora. Vietnamese exile filmmaker and theorist Tinh Minh-ha's *Women, Native, Other* (University of Indiana Press) is a dense and sometimes puzzling set of essays on postcolonialism and feminism that rests on a generation of theoretical work. At two recent conferences of cinema studies by academics—the Society for Cinema Studies and the University Film and Video Association—panels and debates focused on international cinema and its representations of reality.

This flourishing of debate and publication has exposed not only knowledge but ignorance. It has also shown that cinema, as a mass art-form, is tightly linked to the societies that produce it. International cinema provides windows not only into the world's diverse cultures but also into our understanding of them. To watch a foreign film is not just arm-chair travel or instant sociology but also an exercise in the power of art to shape reality. And, eventually, the questions that surround our understanding of another culture's art are ones that affect our reception of films much closer to us—films such as *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* or *Rambo* or *Out of Africa*.

Social X-ray: Two recent books illustrate different approaches and issues in understanding international film and, by extension, to our understanding of film as a force in society. Ella Shohat, a Sephardic Jewish Israeli and a longtime U.S. resident, has written a probing monograph on the history of Israeli cinema. Andrew Robinson, a quirky British enthusiast, has written a fond profile of India's best-known film artist, Satyajit Ray. Both books are well illustrated, a great help to the curious who are unfamiliar with most of the films involved.

Shohat's study tackles from the start the interlock between society and art, arguing that cinematic form and its socioeconomic context are equally important. Her breadth of knowledge opens the subject not only for film buffs but for anyone curious about the evolution of Israeli culture. She portrays a society that has never come to terms with its own ethnic identities and charts that ambivalence as much through absences as presences in its films.

Israeli cinema was born in politics, with propaganda films that glorified the Sabra (native Israeli) experience and celebrated the cultivation of an empty land. It defined the Arab residents of Palestine, if at all, as benighted denizens of backward cultures, looking to immigrants as

saviors. Films made after 1948—some with the aid of the commerce ministry—developed a "heroic nationalist" theme, with three kinds of heroes: Sabras, kibbutzniks and soldiers. Filmmakers borrowed eagerly from an epic Hollywood style as budgets increased.

In the late '60s, the first viable commercial genre surfaced: a rude, crude, funny and increasingly pornographic pop product called the

FILM

bourekas film (after a pastry popular with the Sephardim population). The films built on the rich ethnic culture of the Sephardic Jews (who came from all over the Middle East), one long-despised by the Eastern European Ashkenazi elite. *Bourekas* films bore some parallels with *commedia dell'arte*, says Shohat, although their plot resolutions often signaled the limits of populist celebration. Either a happy mixed marriage would result or the Sephardic heroes would find happiness by emigration to the U.S. While offering a sometimes-ironic commentary on the power politics of ethnicity in Israel, they also reinforced stereotypes about the Sephardim, such as that the Sephardi peoples were backward and rural—ignoring the huge immigration from such sophisticated urban centers as Alexandria, Casablanca, Istanbul and Tehran.

Israeli government support for film production—and later for "original quality film"—fed the fortunes of the idealistic (and mostly Ashkenazi) filmmakers who wanted, in the

wake of the New Wave, to make personal art films. Shohat argues that those films—some of them popular on the international film festival circuit—expressed a growing alienation and dissension within the elite. But critiques seem to stop with the plight of the anxious artist. These films, Shohat argues, show that while Palestinian reality was displaced in the movies and the Sephardi reality "misplaced," the European immigrant and Sabra experience was one of being perpetually out of place—in the East but never of it.

Palestinian filmmaking has been fostered in a gingerly way by filmmakers' funding organizations and permitted in a cautious way by the state. Films made by Palestinians of the same class as the people who opened the doors for them nicely suited the needs of the Israeli elite to represent the society as democratic and at least potentially pluralist. Shohat awaits signs of a culturally "polyphonic" cinema as evidence that Israeli society has matured.

Even if you've never seen an Israeli film, *Israeli Cinema* has a fascination to it, especially for those who have conceived of the ethnic and political tensions of that country along the lines of the Palestinian disenfranchisement. The problems of the artist in choosing and elaborating a theme reveal several separate, unequal but equally painful struggles for self-identification in the wider society.

Polyglot artist: Andrew Robinson's portrait of Satyajit Ray, on the other hand, is joyfully personalist, while attempting to locate the artist

as a member of the many cultural circles to which he belongs. Ray, whose *Apu* trilogy first announced him as a major international artist, has always made films primarily for a Bengali audience. Robinson, who learned Bengali as a condition of accompanying Ray in his pursuit of this profile, describes him vaguely and warmly as a humanist above all, someone who strives to make films that are "timeless." He never quite manages to distill what makes timeless art, but he's not the first to fail in that mission. He also provides a hefty and easy-to-read background, along with lengthy plot summaries and production descriptions of Ray's films.

Bengali intellectual and artistic culture is perhaps the richest, most polyglot and international in all of India, and Ray grew up in its heart. Ray came from a sophisticated family of respected artists, in the circle of renowned philosopher Rabindranath Tagore. Unlike many Third World artists and some other Indian filmmakers, Ray never saw his job as representing his culture against a hostile and denigrating cultural superior. Comfortably at home in an international and especially Anglophile culture, one that had also long since engaged questions of cultural authenticity, he has explored the human drama within it.

As Robinson's film descriptions demonstrate, Ray's subject matter has been expansive—he has made historical dramas, children's films, shrewd social criticism of the Bengali middle class, and even translated the Ibsen play *An Enemy of the People* into Bengali terms. His earliest success was built on the story of a young boy in a rural village (*Pather Panchali*), drawn from a famous Bengali novel. But his approach even to that traditional material was one that depended on an understanding of individual psychology and aspiration that may seem (especially to those who don't know Bengal) more Western than Eastern.

If he has repeatedly addressed questions of women's roles and tensions between religion and science, there's no political or social moralism in his work. And, as Robinson also details, Ray is very much an auteur, drawing on his skills as a visual artist and writer to compose his films.

Although not the first book on Satyajit Ray, this may be the most accessible to unfamiliar audiences, especially since it is written—if sometimes too much in an at-the-feet-of-the-master mode—in the voice of a loving amateur.

Books such as these offer non-experts and non-academics an opportunity to participate in the growing curiosity about the cinematic images beyond the pale of the familiar. They shake up complacency and peek beyond cultural blinders. And with luck, they'll go along with a growing appetite for—and access to—the cinematic wealth beyond the cineplex spectacles. ■

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By Matthew Reiss

IF NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA WERE obliged to merge today, their meeting would be better described as a collision than a reunification. Like the current stalemate in talks between the two reciprocally repressive regimes, the first South/North Korean Film Festival illustrated that the wedge driven

FILM

through a single culture 40 years ago has caused two antagonistic cultures to emerge with little more than geneology in common.

One often forgets that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North) and the Republic of Korea (South) are at war. The cease-fire of 1953 curtailed open combat but did not end sporadic fighting or charges of espionage, counterespionage and terrorism. In North/South Korean relations, everyone suspects the other to be a spy. Americans are referred to as "U.S. imperialist aggressors" by the Democrats, and those who fail to see the anti-communist rhetoric against the North are assumed to be dupes of the Republicans.

Thus, despite the pageantry and surface friendliness, the festival's opening had some tense undertones. The hundreds of Korean-American small-business owners and their families who attended found themselves amid tight security at the "Terrace on the Park," overlooking the site of the 1963-64 Worlds Fair, in a heavily Korean enclave of Queens, N.Y.

Korean spyfest: When a local photojournalist ventured into the gaze of a North Korean VIP, he was roughly tossed away by the shoulder strap. After I squeezed behind a row of chairs that turned out to be reserved for South Korean glitterati, I fell under the constant scrutiny of a couple of inscrutables with no interest in the movies.

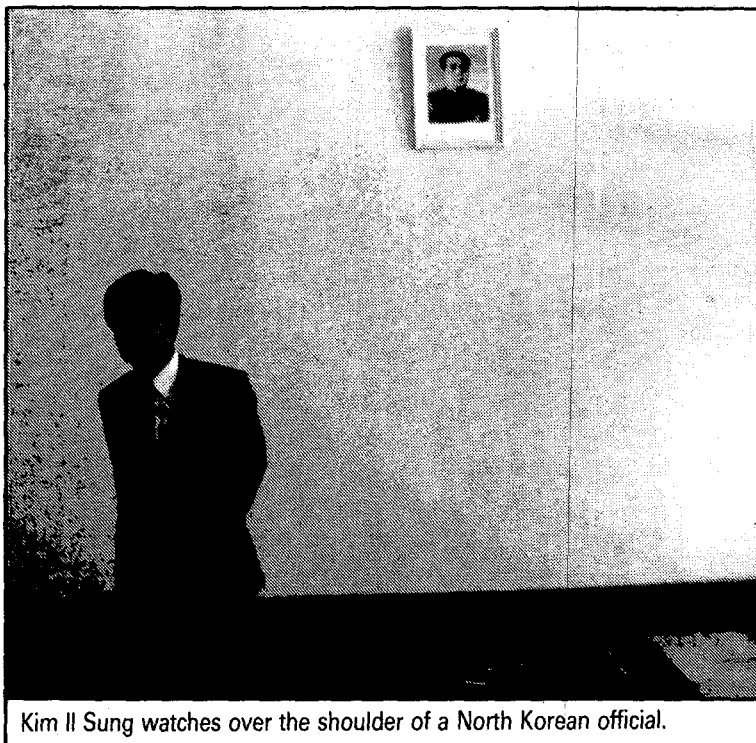
The films, which I attended with a Korean friend, were shown in a World Fair-era theater in Flushing Meadow Park. An audience of more than 100 Korean-Americans came to see Byung Ho Oh's *Meet Me at Myohyang*, a reference to a mountain range 50 miles north of North Korea's capital of Pyongyang. *Meet Me* is a story of love, innocence and, like all North Korean media, the glory of Kim Il Sung.

Kim is the North's septuagenarian "Great Leader," whom North Koreans are taught to revere as revolutionary hero, respect as oppressive dictator and pray to as living god. Though this deification is often ridiculed by those of Judeo-Christian background, it is common among Eastern monarchs, from Japanese Emperor Hirohito to Cambodian Prince Sihanouk.

In any case, North Korean cinema is certainly a product of government propaganda mills and is not designed for export. The magnificent backdrops of *Myohyang*'s startling rock formations, waterfalls and kaleidoscope trees are presented as creations of the Great Leader, as are the personal triumphs of the film's protagonists.

Young Hee Hang plays a stonecut-

Korea: splicing together a badly edited nation



Kim Il Sung watches over the shoulder of a North Korean official.

ter who writes poetry. He is assigned to carve the words "Kim Il Sung rules" into *Myohyang*'s beautiful stone face. Hang brings his poetic works to the home of a vacationing newspaper editor, where his wandering gaze focuses on the editor's daughter (played by Won Kim). His stare cannot be mistaken for heavenly love at first sight, though Kim neither returns it nor notices his presence. Instead, she finds his poems and ridicules them, unaware that Hang is within earshot.

In the following scene, Kim, a novice painter, loses her way while searching for a pleasant rock to sketch. Unglued by heavily amplified sounds of nature, she races wildly through *Myohyang*'s intense reds and greens. She shrieks and drops her sketch book while trying to escape the grasp of what turns out to be a drooping branch. She looks up to find Hang at his day job. Kim exudes shame, but Hang does not gloat. Instead, he tells her constructively that her painting sucks and not to paint anymore.

Poetic license revoked: Not unlike most U.S. networks, which rarely situate sitcoms in welfare hotels, director Oh casts Kim's mother as a famous poet and her father as a hardworking editor. Her famous mother comments that Hang's poetry is wonderful but plagiarized from another Korean poet. Hang remains the object of ridicule.

Subsequently, Hang offers to show Kim a more inspiring peak deep in *Myohyang* park, so that she can better appreciate the undulation of the cascading waters. Kim's sister, having heard this line somewhere else, follows the couple, stealing behind them through the underbrush.

Through steep gullies and over sharp ridges, Hang leads Kim to a gushing waterfall. She paints it. He

admires her canvas. Relations are normalized. Hang, in turn, rants about *Myohyang*'s beauty and thanks Kim Il Sung for its existence. His rant is accompanied by chants of "Kim Il Sung flew up to victory. Long live Kim Il Sung" on the sound track. Kim's sister's sinister thoughts are dispelled. "We didn't know about his sincerity," reports Kim. "Do you love him?" asks her sister. "Why not," answers Kim.

In the concluding scene, the family rereads Hang's poems and, to their unexpected delight, find them to be serious pieces of hack verse praising Kim Il Sung. But the Korean-American filmfest audience breaks into laughter when Hang performs his works. Such gushing odes would likely signal a North Korean audience to jump to its feet to salute their Great Leader. At the festival, a confused North Korean delegate turned to one of the festival's facilitators and asked if the audience had not properly comprehended the dialogue. Though the dialogue was a bit stiffer than colloquial Korean, the laughter was provoked not by the dialect but by the words. The worship and praise heaped on Kim, while typical of a '40s-style personality cult, does not play well to Americanized ears.

"The North Koreans don't understand that their propaganda is the source of constant entertainment," observed one American. Despite the North Korean government's minimal contact with the outside world, he suggested, it will eventually understand that the premise of their monolithic culture is too fantastic to withstand objective scrutiny.

Response to subjugation: But Kim Il Sung's philosophy of self-reliance, called *juché* in the Korean language, does address the Korean people's need for cultural pride after centuries of subjugation to Chinese

and, later, Japanese occupation forces. After Pyongyang was leveled during the Korean war, those in the less-developed North appear to enjoy a certain amount of personal pride through the symbolic victories of Kim Il Sung. Thus the personal self-determination of Kim Il Sung and the worldwide respect which the propaganda mills have created for him is gobbled up by the masses.

This is not to say he is without opposition after 40 years of rule. I was given the impression during a visit to North Korea one year ago that many North Koreans do not believe in Kim's supremacy and are instead in a position of praying to the man who holds a gun to their heads.

During last year's Anti-America Day rally in Pyongyang, 500,000 North Koreans shouted, "*Juché*" with frightening gusto, simultaneously thrusting out their right fists. But *juché* is not merely the paean of the North. To South Koreans, *juché* is the call for an end to U.S. control over nuclear and conventional forces, which compromise the legitimacy of South Korean President Roh Tae Woo. A majority of South Korea's student radicals reportedly favor this philosophy, and shout "*Juché*" during their reunification marches to the northern border. At worst, *juché* can be described as the banner of xenophobia and cultural stagnation.

But if the North Korean people ever become convinced that their current subservience is to a false god, no armed force could keep them in their place. And despite limited tolerance for dissent in the South, the current generation of radical students illustrates their volatility. They already find subjugation to government authority unacceptable and don't hesitate to offer physical opposition to it.

Thus it was no surprise that after waiting 30 minutes for VIPs from both the North and the South delegations to arrive for the start of the second movie (a slick, sexy, otherwoman flick from the South that could have been made in Hollywood), the audience demanded that the show go on. It didn't, so they got up en masse and asked for their money back.

"Koreans have fast tempers," my friend told me. "When they feel the high-class people oppress the general people, they don't take it. They demonstrate." Such a scene could hardly take place in a Pyongyang theater, where the short-tempered have become submissive and such outbreaks have been effectively removed from public view. In fact, it may be just this submissiveness that differentiates the Northern culture from that of the South. And something as simple as the revival of the Korean temper may well be the factor that ultimately leads to reunification.

Matthew Reiss is a writer living in New York.



By Patrick Z. McGavin

THE TORONTO FILM FESTIVAL HAS the demented, expressive qualities of a dream. Held for 11 days in September, the festival is one long, unfettered joy.

No other North American film festival has such a startling mix. Toronto is a feverish rush of offbeat studio projects, independent American cinema, the European avant-garde, Third World offerings and astounding offshoots such as the hyperviolent Asian cinema.

Toronto provides a corrective to

FILM

Hollywood's venal, restrictive distribution system, which effectively cancels out marginal or experimental films. You'd think there would be room for an alternative cinema with 24,000 first-run screens in this country, but, as *Variety* points out, only 57 percent of the nearly 500 movies produced in the U.S. this year will receive theatrical exhibition.

Films to watch for: So Toronto is the ideal place to discover new talents such as Hal Hartley, the 30-year-old former painter who got everyone's attention last year with *The Unbelievable Truth*. His follow-up film, *Trust*, may be too similar thematically, but it's a fuller, more mature work. A terse comedy about a pregnant high school dropout and her romance with an emotionally remote electronics genius, *Trust* is a dead-on satire of suburban apocalypse, a tightly controlled universe that unfolds from within. Harley has a real eye for composition and a gift for fluid, absurdist dialogue.

The Field, the new film by Irish director and playwright Jim Sheridan (*My Left Foot*), is less successful. Well photographed by Jack Conroy, *The Field* has a desperately simplistic center, a tale about a mad, foolhardy farmer who battles a wealthy American. There's a harsh, stylized beauty in the landscape and Sheridan reveals consistent improvement as a director, but there's no emotional connection here.

The same could be said of Bruce Beresford's *Mister Johnson*, which is a great deal more visually exciting than *Driving Miss Daisy* and just as naive and unsettling. Working from Joyce Cary's novel, Beresford doesn't impose any shape or pacing on the story. It's languid, reactionary and too reverential about British imperialism in post-World War I Nigeria. Thankfully, what the film is not is another piece about white suffering over black injustice, and it does feature a remarkable turn by Maynard Eziashi in the title role.

William Boyd wrote the adaptation of *Mister Johnson*, but he's more convincing and truthful reworking Peruvian author Mario Vargas Llosa's *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter* in Jon Amiel's *Tune in Tomorrow*, a frenzied lyrical comedy set in 1951 New Orleans. Amiel directed

1990 Hemdale Film Corporation



Highlights: *The Grifters* (top), *Tune in Tomorrow* (right) and *Vincent and Theo* (left).

Film forecast on the northern front

Dennis Potter's masterly *The Singing Detective*, and his work here is more conventional, though just as clean and inspired.

The complex, layered screenplay conveys the romantic preoccupations of Martin (Keanu Reeves) and his 36-year-old "aunt" (Barbara Hershey), framed around the fantastic qualities of a sublime radio soap opera concocted by Pedro (Peter Falk), an oddball, cynical scriptwriter. Amiel's elaborate and expressive cutting between the real and the imagery is bold and comically precise.

Marginal freedom: The prolific Finnish wunderkind Aki Kaurismäki turned up with two new films—*I Hired a Contract Killer* (his first English-language film) and *The Match Factory Girl* (the final installment of his loose trilogy after *Shadows in Paradise* and *Ariel*). Kaurismäki's deadpan, proletarian comedies are visually ravishing (they're all shot by Timo Salminen) and typically pivot on themes of escape, sexual longing,

economic marginalization and freedom. They're B-movie pastiches routed through a droll, ironic sensibility.

The tenacious American independent Jon Jost (*Plain Talk and Common Sense*) also brought two movies—*All the Vermeers in New York* and *Sure Fire*. Stylistically, they're miles apart. *Vermeers* is elliptical, poetic and spare, with beautifully composed wide-screen images. It's a refined film that seamlessly crosscuts among three major story lines. *Sure Fire* is more experimental (with some stunning optical effects), claustrophobic and intense, with a great performance from Tom Blair as a violently off-putting entrepreneur and hunter. The uncompromising Jost writes, edits, photographs and directs all of his films, and, despite his voracious output, he's almost completely unknown in this country.

It's interesting to record how opinion weighs against and for specific movies. Jean-Paul Rappeneau's

Cyrano de Bergerac was voted the best film by the public but has too many contradictory impulses to fully succeed; shot in CinemaScope, the film doesn't fill up the dead spaces or sustain mood. And Gerard Depardieu's widely praised performance is theatrically overscaled and exaggerated. David Leland's *The Big Man* was unfairly scorched by British critics, but it has visual flair (sinister tracking movements and striking

Toronto provides a corrective to Hollywood's venal distribution system, which effectively cancels out marginal or experimental films.

overhead crane shots) and a superb performance from Liam Neeson as an unemployed miner who reluctantly agrees to a bare-knuckles boxing match. Michael Verhoeven's Brechtian black comedy *The Nasty Girl* ends disappointingly but is otherwise a trenchant satire on Germany's enigmatic past.

Masterminds: Ryszard Bugajski's

notorious Polish drama *Interrogation*, completed in 1982 and immediately shelved, is a relentless study of torture and deprivation. Krystyna Janda plays an apolitical cabaret singer jailed for her sexual daring. This blunt film lacks some formal complexity, but its effect is emotionally devastating. Janda also stars in Krzysztof Zanussi's *Inventory*, a radical departure stylistically. Composed in long, unbroken takes, the film is a sad, beautiful critique of contemporary Polish life as seen through the relationship of a geography student and a mysterious older woman.

Two world-class talents, Robert Altman and Eric Rohmer, weigh in with *Vincent and Theo* and *A Tale of Springtime*, respectively. After working in theatrical adaptations and television, Altman returns with this accomplished film that explores the intense, curious relationship of Vincent Van Gogh and his art-dealer brother, expressed in Altman's hallmark fashion: overlapping dialogue, discordant editing and freewheeling acting. Originally a two-part, four-hour TV miniseries, the film's delirious design and formal beauty are mesmerizing.

Rohmer initiates a new cycle of works, "Tales of the Four Seasons" with his new film, a loose, informal comedy of sexual manners. It's not particularly deep, just funny and stabbed with the shock of recognition. Stephen Frears' *The Grifters*, another adaptation of a Jim Thompson paperback novel, produced by Martin Scorsese, was indifferently received, an unexplained phenomenon considering its dark, perverse thrills and idiosyncratic cast (John Cusack, Anjelica Huston, Annette Bening). This moody, poetic work about "cons" brilliantly captures displacement and rootlessness. It's an interesting contemporary take on Los Angeles.

Portuguese master Manoel de Oliveira was the subject of an overdue retrospective, and the 82-year-old avant-gardist is like some bizarre amalgam of Max Ophüls and Jean Cocteau. He's a fiendishly baroque stylist, and in films such as *Past and Present*, *The Tragedy of Love*, *The Cannibals*, *The Satin Slipper* and his masterpiece *Francisca*, his deep-focus compositions and deployment of space conjure up so many possibilities (formal and thematic), it's like watching the cinema reborn, right in front of you. His new work, *Non, or the Vain Glory of Command* is just as audacious, a dense, mystical history lesson on Portugal's colonial past. The longtime neglect of Oliveira's work illustrates the need for Toronto's festival.

Given the restrictive commercial structure of the U.S. film business, many of the most interesting films shown in Toronto will have a difficult time making a dent in "the lower 48." But keep your eyes open, because films worth watching are always worth watching for.

Patrick Z. McGavin is a Chicago writer and critic.

Sanders

Continued from page 7

part, to a pair of costly miscalculations he made in the campaign's waning days. First, Smith decided to vote in favor of the initial federal budget proposal jointly crafted by the White House and the congressional Democratic leadership. That plan, involving Medicare cutbacks and tax hikes for average income-earners, went down to defeat as both right-wing Republicans and liberal Democrats rejected it. Sanders was quick to seize on Smith's support for the ill-fated package, contending that the congressman now stood revealed as an ally of the rich and an enemy of the elderly.

What had been, until that point, a neck-and-neck race began to move in Sanders' favor. Two weeks before election day, it appeared that the socialist might win by three or four points.

Panicked by that trend, Smith committed a fatal error. His campaign aired a TV ad questioning his opponent's patriotism and charging that Sanders' socialist beliefs were inconsistent with "Vermont values." This last-minute decision to go negative backfired on Smith and was probably the factor that caused a tight race to become a rout.

Attack ads simply do not work well in a small state such as Vermont, where many voters are personally acquainted with candidates. Attempting to portray Sanders as a closet communist was a particularly stupid maneuver, since even many of his staunchest opponents have come to regard Sanders with grudging respect. After 20 years of tireless campaigning, Vermonters know that Bernie Sanders' agenda is anything but hidden. ☐

Kevin J. Kelley is a journalist living in Vermont.

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WASHINGTON, DC

November 16

PROSPECTS FOR DEMOCRACY IN ZAIRE: a dialogue between the Zairean opposition and members of the international community who support the transition from dictatorship to democracy in Zaire. At Howard University, Blackburn Center, 2419 4th Street NW, from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Registration: \$15, student \$10. For more information, contact the Rainbow Lobby, (202) 457-0700.

February 15-16

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) has announced that the Third National Conference on Organic/Sustainable Agriculture Policies will be held at the Ramada Renaissance Hotel. The annual conference, which focuses on state and national policies that promote more sustainable agriculture practices, will be co-sponsored by the Institute for Alternative Agriculture, the Texas Department of Agriculture and several other state agriculture departments. It will bring together agricultural scientists and representatives of consumer, environmental and other organizations for two exciting days of speeches, panel discussions and networking. For further information, contact Agricultural Conference, CSPI, 1875 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20009-5728, (202) 332-9110.

BOSTON

November 17-18

OCCUPATION AND INTERVENTION: PERSPECTIVES ON THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS. A conference organized by the Middle East Justice Network. What are the roots of the current crisis? How can we understand the massive U.S. military deployment in the region? What are its implications for democracy and for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Speakers include Egbal Ahmad and Noam Chomsky. Registration (includes lunch) \$20, \$10 students. Location: Massachusetts College of Art Tower Auditorium, located at 621 Huntington Ave. To register in advance, send check to P.O. Box 558, Cambridge, MA 02238. For more information call (617) 666-8061.

December 1

A New England-wide march and rally against war in the Persian Gulf will be held on Saturday at 1 p.m. in Copley Square, with a march to the Boston Common followed by a rally at 2:30 p.m. Nationally known speakers include Daniel Ellsberg, Gus Newport and Dessiam Williams. Entertainment includes live music and political satirist Barry Crimmins. Contact the Emergency Coalition for Peace, Justice, and Non-intervention in the Middle East, 11 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138, (617) 661-8066.

April 30

Call for submissions for Fiction Anthology about Lesbian and Gay Parenting from men, women, teens and children. Looking to represent a wide spectrum of experience: artificial insemination, adoption, custody issues, choosing/not choosing to parent, child/parent/friend relationships, multi-ethnic perspectives, etc. Prose only. All submissions must be double-spaced. Contributors will be paid. Address submissions and requests for information to: Parenting Anthology, 152 Kittredge St., Boston, MA 02131. Please include SASE. Submission deadline: April 30, 1991.

NEW YORK

November 18-24

THE NEW YORK MARXIST SCHOOL
SUNDAY, NOV. 18-RealPoetik Reading Series: Tony Towle and Paul Violi; 3 p.m.; \$5.
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SATURDAY, NOV. 24-(Anna Louise Strong born, 1885) Dierdre Murray and Elliott Sharp: Concert; 8 p.m.; \$7.

All events take place at the New York Marxist School, 79 Leonard St., New York, NY 10011, (212) 941-0332.

PHILADELPHIA

November 30-December 2

A NEW STAGE IN THE BATTLE FOR UNION DEMOCRACY, a conference held by the Association for Union Democracy at the Wyndham Franklin Plaza Hotel. The conference is scheduled for Friday evening, and all day Saturday and Sunday. Featured speakers include Glenn Berrien, president, Mail Handlers Union; Jerry Tucker, director, New Directions Movement; Jane Slaughter, editor, *Labor Notes*; Lewie Anderson, president, REAP; Ray Rogers, Corporate Campaign; Ron Carey, candidate for Teamsters president; Ken Paff, national organizer, Teamsters for a Democratic Union; Kim Fellner, executive director, National Writers Union; Victor Reuther, founder, UAW; and Joseph "Chip" Yablonski, attorney. For more information, contact AUD, YMCA Building, 30 Third Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11217, (718) 855-6650.

HARTFORD, CT

December 6

Opening of "The American Left, 1870-1950," the first major museum exhibition of its kind, with more than 100 historic posters, broadsides, cartoons, buttons and original prints and paintings by many artists, including Gellert, Rivera, Gropper, from Socialist Labor Party, Socialist Party, IWW, Communist Party, left unions, fraternal and ethnic movements, etc. **MUSEUM OF AMERICAN POLITICAL LIFE**, 200 Bloomfield Ave., West Hartford. Opening Forum, 7 p.m., features Barbara Ehrenreich, Charlene Mitchell, William Phillips, Milton Cantor, Paul Buhle. (Show runs to June 1991.) Exhibit catalogue with narrative by Paul Buhle, \$5. For more information, call (203) 243-4090.

LOVELAND, OH

December 27-30

Announcing a Symposium, **MOVING INTO THE FUTURE**, to celebrate the 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE GRAIL in the USA, 1940-1990. Speakers and topics include Rosemary Radford Ruether: *Lay Women in the Church*; Daniel and Mary Kane: *The Grail in the Lay Apostolate*; Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza: *Feminist Theology*; Jacqueline di Salvo: *The Struggle for Justice*; Diana Hayes: *Multicultural Perspectives*; Miriam McGillis: *The Fate of the Earth*; and Maria De L. Pintasiglio: *An Agenda for the '90s*. Cost: \$125-\$175 for program, room and meals. For more information, contact Janet Kalven, Grailville, 932 O'Bannonville Road, Loveland, OH 45140, (513) 683-2340.

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Because writing is a diligent and painstaking exercise, I cannot carry on extensive correspondence, but I welcome comments, references, and clippings on any part of this project. Collaborators will be given credit by name unless they prefer to remain anonymous. Should I die before completion, my widow will give all gathered materials and drafts to *In These Times* for them to dispose as they see fit, in a wastebasket or to interested persons.

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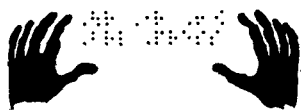
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Scars and gripes forever



A fantasy of
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By Woody Igou

The National Rifle Association (NRA) spokesman is exhausted. Since the nightmare shooting of schoolchildren in Stockton, Calif., he has debated his cause on a constant stream of emotional talk shows, battling with all his skills for an unfettered Right to Bear Arms. As he drifts off to sleep alone in a strange hotel, he longs for an earlier time, when men were men, when people knew and cherished their God-given rights. He imagines a robust and powerful America, an America without liberal sissies who daily attempt to subvert the intent of the Founding Fathers. He dreams.

★ ★ ★

[It is early morning at Mount Vernon. Fog is rising up from the Potomac as some of the Founding Fathers—Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Ben Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and Aaron Burr—gather for a squirrel hunt. President George Washington enters the backyard with a Colt M-16A2 assault rifle slung over each shoulder.]

WASHINGTON: Yo, Founders! Wake up! How's about some dawn's early light? [Washington squeezes off a few rounds, sending tracer fire across the Potomac.]

JEFFERSON: Wow, a laser-sighted M-16A2 with optional grenade

launcher! Very Executive. Hell, fellas, check my latest invention. [Jefferson opens his overcoat revealing a micro UZI in a shoulder harness.] Can you believe the size of this thing? Hell, it'll probably fit on my dumbwaiter.

HAMILTON: [Wheeling up a wagon-mounted Walther MPK machine gun with scope.] Squirrel fricassee, anyone? I'm loaded to shoot the first small hairy thing with buck teeth that moves. [Hamilton spins the gun around and aims it directly at Aaron Burr.]

BURR: Not funny, Hamilton. You'd probably miss, anyway. Hell, it's over 10 feet.

MADISON: Gosh, guys, I don't know. Maybe this Second Amendment thing has gotten out of hand. When I drafted it, I didn't think we quite had this in mind. We look like we're marching into war.

FRANKLIN: You little runt! What's the matter, did Dolley throw away your cap gun? Look, take that damn lace collar off your neck and come over here. [Franklin hoists an M1 carbine to Madison's shoulder.] Hold it up, that's it, feel the steel against your cheek. Bingo! Fellas—look who's *bearin' arms*!

MADISON: But do we really need attack weapons? I mean, we're just squirrel hunting, right?

FRANKLIN: You miss the point entirely, Madison. The point is not whether or not we need these weapons—it's simply that

we have a right to bear them. [Madison hasn't even dried on the Bill of Rights and you've already forgotten them. When we drafted them, did we ever sit there like picky sons of bitches and say, "It's OK to bear arms except for machine guns, attack rifles, .124 grain "Eliminator" Hollow-Point explosive ammo or anti-aircraft guns?]

MADISON: No, not really.

FRANKLIN: Of course not. You were sweating like a stuck pig. Did we ever specifically exclude SAR-180.22 caliber semi-automatics, the Saurer P-225 "Gutbuster" .380 mm, personalized flame-throwers or the use of a USAS-12 shotgun with a 1066-XL "Chuck Norris" light mount/bayonet package?

MADISON: No, but we were in a hurry, and...

WASHINGTON: Don't be a paranoid homunculus, Madison. We've got it made. If it's late at night and I'm kind of nostalgic for battle, you know, can't sleep, what's a guy to do? I go out back and squeeze off a few rounds with my U21-23. Maybe I'll use armor-piercing ammo and cut down a few trees. No biggie. Now if Martha wakes up, she's mad. If she comes downstairs railing at me, I can just say those four little words.

MADISON: What words?

IN UNISON: *Right to Bear Arms!* [the rest of the Founders give high-fives all round. Aaron Burr pops a cold Bud.]

JEFFERSON: That's right, the ol' Bill of Rights just stops them in their tracks. Look, the other day we had a little accident. One of the grandchildren got into my arsenal...I mean, collection, and ended up shooting his little sister in the head with an UZI. A tragedy. The family was upset with me at first, until I gave them a little history lesson and informed them of the

IN UNISON: *Right to Bear Arms!*

WASHINGTON: Don't be a spoilsport, Madison. At least you got your damn Third Amendment passed. Hell, some nights I would love nothing better than to haul off and quarter some troops, just for old times sake, but noooo!

FRANKLIN: Where is your patriotism, Madison? You'll never make it to Mount Rushmore with ideas like that.

MADISON: Neither will you, fatty, unless they find you your own mountain. Anyway, it's probably too hard to carve granny glasses out of stone.

FRANKLIN: Don't mess with me, Madison. [He levels a Soviet AK47/AKM assault rifle at Madison.]

son.] Do you realize that if we made these weapons illegal, the only people who would own them would be British spies!

JEFFERSON: Cool off, Ben. Remember your gout.

FRANKLIN: Cool off? I'm fine! [Franklin bursts into song.] "*The rockets' red glare...*" [He fires a few rounds over Madison's head.] "*The bombs bursting in air...*" [Franklin continues to fire rhythmically into the air.] Let's duel, Madison. If you win—and only if you win—will you be able to pry my cold, albeit pudgy fingers off this weapon.

BURR: A duel. This is too cool.

HAMILTON: It's the American way.

WASHINGTON: A duel is it. Gentlemen, take your positions and begin: one...two... [Madison struggles to raise his weapon.]

MADISON: I can't lift this thing. Wait!

WASHINGTON: Six...seven... eight...

MADISON: I refuse.

WASHINGTON: Nine...ten...

[BANG! BANG! BANG! ... BANG!]

★ ★ ★

The NRA spokesman wakes with a jolt. A smile spreads across his face as he reaches over and turns off his UZI sound-effect clock radio.

Another day, another talk show. He starts the day feeling refreshed indeed. ■

Woody Igou is a writer living in Florida.